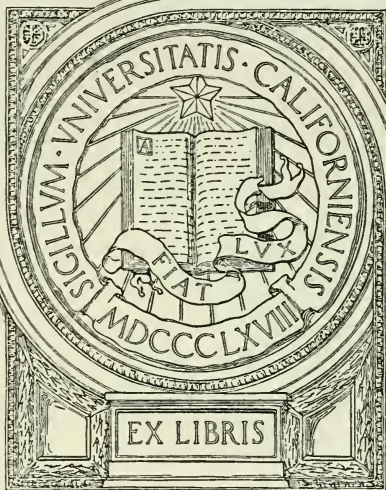


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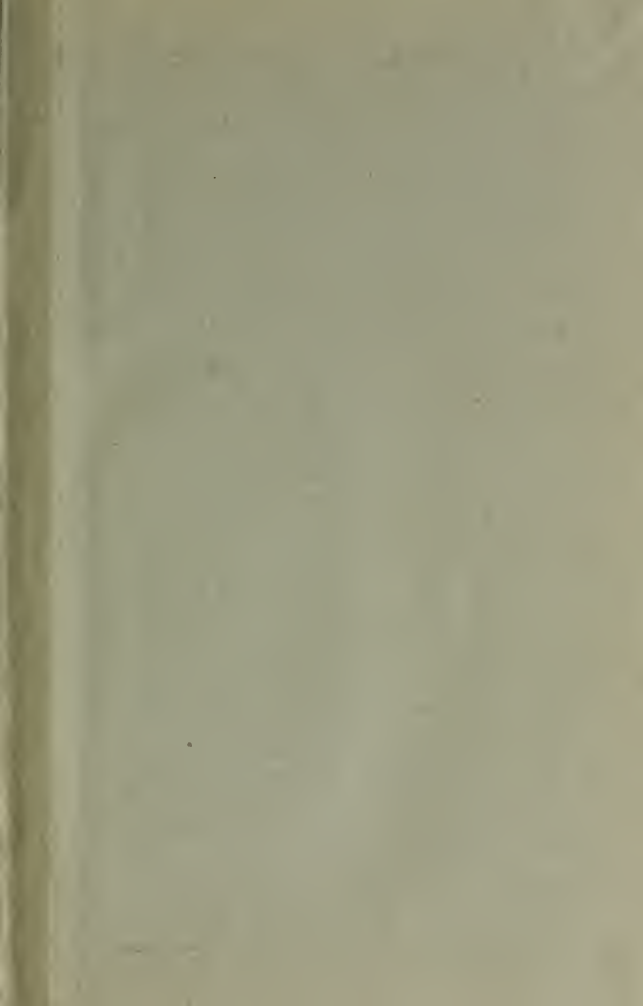


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GLEANINGS FROM THE TALMUD

SELECTED AND NEWLY TRANSLATED
INTO ENGLISH

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM MACINTOSH, M.A., PH.D.

Author of

*"Rabbi Jesus: Sage and Saviour"; "The Voice from the
Cross"; "The Prince of Peace," etc.*



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INTRODUCTION

THE Talmud is a great mass of Rabbinical lore current in the time of our Lord and in later centuries. The word "Talmud" is derived from a Hebrew word meaning "to learn." The name is used to describe the canonical and civil law of the Jews and the compilations in which this is contained. These compilations consist of two parts. One is the Mishnah, or text, the other the Gemara, or commentary and complement. Just as the Pentateuch contained the *written* law, the Mishnah and the Gemara formed the oral or *unwritten* law. It is impossible now to tell when this unwritten law took its rise, and when it began to be received with authority. The many difficult and obscure points in the history and customs as given in the Pentateuch would early call for exposition by the prophets and teachers of the people, and expositors were not wanting. Their elucidations of the written law were received with respect; but this respect depended a good deal on the reputation of the teacher.

About the middle of the first century the

oral law was expounded chiefly in the schools of two famous teachers Hillel, and Schammai, and the teaching of these two great schools was continued by certain Rabbis till about the year 200 A.D. when it is believed the traditional teachings were gathered up into one great whole and committed to writing by Rabbi Jehudah the Holy. This was called Mishnah or "repetition," *i.e.* of the law. Although springing from two rival schools it gives a faithful reflection of the mind of the Pharisee of the time, and in this way helps to illustrate the teaching of Christ. We especially see how justified was our Lord's sarcasm of the Pharisees who were so particular regarding the payment of tithe of mint and anise and cummin while omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith (St Matt. xxiii. 23).

In course of time the Mishnah became obscured by speculations; traditions arose, new methods of interpretation were invented, casuistry developed, and the Mishnah required to be explained; hence arose the Gemara. The Mishnah and Gemara together are usually called the Talmud. The Gemara grew to extraordinary dimensions, and was in turn divided into two portions. One called the Halakah, or "rule," embodied the precedents established by the Rabbis and their decisions in questions religious, social, and political. The other, called the Haggada, a vast collection of tales, legends, homilies,

parables and gnomes. There were two Gemaras, the Palestinian, usually called the Jerusalem Talmud, and the Babylonian Talmud, believed to have been redacted at Sura in Babylonia by Rabbi Ashe (365-427 A.D.). The final completion of this codex, which required about sixty years, is attributed to the Rabbinic school of Saboraim at the end of the fifth century. Speaking roughly, the Babylonian Talmud is about four times as large as that of the Jerusalem, and its thirty-six treatises now cover 2947 folio leaves, in twelve folio volumes.

The Talmud has sometimes been called the "New Testament of the Jews," but the term is misleading, for in no sense can it be compared with the Christian Scriptures. It has no unity, no definite purpose running through it, and contains no message for mankind. It is a heterogeneous mass of moral precepts, childish ideas, curious opinions of different Rabbis at different periods, grotesque fancies, absurd and far-fetched expositions of Old Testament texts. The Rabbis frequently contradict each other; they even modify and abrogate the Mosaic code where it does not seem consonant with the spirit and requirements of the age. We even find in its pages the startling assertion that the Messiah had appeared as King Hesekiah, and the opinion of Rabbi Hillel that "there would be no Messiah," although this contradicts the most cherished hopes of

the Jews. Yet there are not wanting the wild imaginations of others concerning the glories of Messiah's Kingdom.

The Talmud has never received formal recognition by the Jews, and indeed the character of the whole work would render this impossible. Yet it has been received with respect, and the spirit of liberalism which it breathes is a most commendable feature, while the high value it sets on intellect and reason is illustrated in a legend that conveys the lesson that not even a miracle should be allowed to convince a man against the decision of his own mind. The value of the Talmud to Christian scholars lies not in the noble precepts that may be culled here and there, and which are surpassed or found in a more perfect form in the New Testament, but in the light it throws on the social and religious life of the Jews in the time of Christ. Many a saying and custom in the New Testament is thus illuminated, while methods of teaching and forms of illustration with which we are familiar in the Gospels were methods and forms that were in common use in the schools of the Rabbis. Herr Paul Fiebig, in his interesting book, *Altjüdische Gleichnisse und die Gleichnisse Jesu*, a work to which we are much indebted, contends that the parabolic form of teaching used by our Lord was by no means original. It was a familiar method of conveying truths and teaching lessons of conduct. It was as

natural for a teacher to "open his mouth in a parable and to utter dark sayings," as it was for the people to incline their ear to a parable. Hence Jesus simply followed the custom of the Jewish people when "He spake many things to them in parables." It is the transcendent truths Christ taught that make Him surpass those teachers whose forms of instruction he had adopted. In their eyes he was a Rabbi, a title by which He was frequently addressed, but He differed from the other Rabbis in what He taught, not in the manner of His teaching.

To the Israelite the expositions, or commentaries depended, as we have said, to a large degree, on the traditional authority of the Rabbis who uttered them. Hence, their sayings were usually supported by the name of the author, backed up in many cases by the names of other Rabbis who had lent the weight of their names to the preceding teachers. These expositions and comments, however absurd and fantastical they might be, were received with respect by the people, and at times placed above the law of Moses. Thus did they transgress the law of God by their tradition as our Lord complained, when they charged Him with not observing these traditions. But the Jew has always had a great regard for authority. In whatever country his lot has been cast, he has been found to be a law-abiding citizen. The

highest compliment the Jews could pay to any of their Rabbis was that his teaching entitled him to become an authority; and this compliment they paid to Christ: "He spoke as one having authority," they willingly testified. Had He been content to play the part of the teacher, and had not made extraordinary personal claims for Himself as their Messiah, as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, He would be enrolled to-day as the greatest of their teachers. In the early part of His career a Master in Israel made the spontaneous confession: "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God." How much the Jew has lost by this rejection of Christ, even as a teacher, is best seen by comparing the Sermon on the Mount with the highest teaching of the Talmud.

The late Dr Franz Delitzsch who devoted a lifetime to the study of Jewish literature says of the Talmud: "No one who has not to some extent mastered the extremely difficult study of this work in the original language is able to form any definite idea of this many-armed Colossus. It is an enormous theatre, in which thousands and thousands of voices, from at least five centuries speak in confusion. No matter how carefully a law is formulated, we know by experience that it always admits of different explanations, and question after question arises when it is applied to the endless variety of actual life. Imagine some 10,000 regulations referring

to Jewish life, and classified according to subject, and some 500 scribes and lawyers, mostly from Palestine or Babylon, who make each one of these regulations the subject of investigation and debate, and with hair-splitting ingenuity exhaust all the latent possibilities of both textual sense and possible application; further, imagine that the fine-spun thread of these interpretations of the law often becomes entangled in digressions, and when one has toiled through long tracks of this sandy desert, one now and then reaches a green oasis where there are proverbs and stories of general interest. Then you will have a more or less accurate idea of this enormous and unique codex of law compared with the bulk of which all the law-books of other nations are Lilliputians, and which most resembles a motley, noisy, and crowded market, while they are quiet hermitages. Among this ceaseless repetition of "Rabbi So-and-So says," "Rab So-and-So says," "Mar (Master) So-and-So says," it may happen that we come on a Pharisee thanking God that he is not as other men, or one more humble, who with the publican says, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" When, therefore, we say that the Talmud is full of recognition of the honour of handicraft, this does not exclude expressions of Pharasaical intellectual pride, which from the proud height of its study of the law, looks down contemptuously on all the professions in the

world, and esteems the ink of learned men more precious than the blood of the martyrs."

For the sake of the general reader we have followed Dr Stern in attempting a rough classification according to subject in the selection brought together in these pages. Dr Stern thinks that his little book of extracts consisting mostly of moral precepts, might with advantage be used in schools and in the home as well as by preachers and teachers of religion. Our selection is larger and more varied than Dr Stern's, and simply aims at giving an opportunity to all who are interested in religion—and who is not?—of knowing something of the treasures of wisdom to be found in that vast codex of religious and ceremonial law called the Talmud, which has received much earnest study from German scholars, but has been almost wholly neglected in England. Readers will, we believe, gain on the whole, a favourable impression of the Talmud from these extracts. This we desire, in order that some at least may be lured to further study. Where a suitable English translation has been found for any of the selections, it has been adopted. The "List of Works" that follows contains only those books that have been of special service in the compilation of this little book, although a number of others in French and German have been consulted.

LIST OF WORKS ON THE TALMUD

CONSULTED IN THE PREPARATION OF
THIS WORK, AND WHICH MAY BE USE-
FUL TO THE STUDENT

1. *Literary Remains of the late Emanuel Deutsch*, with a brief Memoir. London. 1874. See especially the opening article on "The Talmud," which originally appeared in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1867, and was published separately in Germany in 1869 (*Der Talmud*, Berlin).
2. *Jüdisches Handwerkerleben zur Zeit Jesu*. Lectures delivered in the winter of 1867-8 at Leipzig. An English translation appears as No. 23 of the "Unit Library," under the title of "Jewish Artisan Life in the Time of Christ." 1902.
3. *Talmudic Miscellany*. By Paul Isaac Hershon, with a Preface by the late Archdeacon Farrar. London. 1880.
4. *Lichtstrahlen aus dem Talmud* von J. Stern, Rabbiner (Stuttgart). Leipzig. N.D.
5. *Einleitung in den Talmud*, von Hermann Strack. Leipzig. 1900.

6. *Eine kritische Geschichte des Talmud*,
von E. Bischoff. Frankfurt. 1899.
7. *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, von Adolf
Jülicher. Tübingen. 1899.
8. *Talmud und Theologie*, von Paul Fiebig.
Tübingen. 1903.
9. *Altjüdische Gleichnisse und die Gleichnisse
Jesu*, von Paul Fiebig. Tübingen.
1904.
10. The article "Talmud" in the latest
edition of the *Encyclopædia Britan-
nica*, by Dr S. M. Schiller-Szinessy.
11. *Jesus und Hillel*, von Franz Delitzsch.
Erlangen. 1879.
12. *Studies in Judaism*, by S. Schlechter,
Reader of Talmudic in the University
of Cambridge. London. 1896.
13. *Talmudische Chrestomathie*, von B.
Fischer. Leipzig. 1884.
14. *Bibel und Talmud in ihrer Bedeutung für
Philosophie und Kultur*. Leipzig.
1881
15. *Patristische und Talmudische Studien*,
von M. Friedländer. Vienna. 1878.
16. *Rabbinische Blumenlese*, von L. Dukes.
Hanover. 1844.

I

MANKIND

I

WHEN God created man, He took earth from the site of the sanctuary and from the four quarters of the heavens, and created him red, black, and white, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

2

When the Holy One—blessed be His name!—pronounced judgment upon Adam, at the words, “Thorns and thistles shall the earth bring forth to thee,” warm tears fell from Adam’s eyes, and he cried: “O Lord of the world! must the ass and I eat out of the same manger?” But when God added: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,” he submitted.

3

Rabbi Johanan ben Sakkai had five disciples: Eleazer, Joshua, Joseph, Simon, Elieser. Once the Master said: “Listen!

Tell me the name of the highest good after which men ought to strive." Elieser said: "A good eye" (to wish the welfare of another). Joshua said: "A good friend." Joseph: "A good neighbour." Simon: "Prudence." Eleazar: "A good heart." Then the Master said: "Eleazar has given the best answer, for a good heart includes everything that is good."

4

In three things a man's character can be recognised; in the wine-cup, in his purse, in his anger.

5

Esteem no one meanly and consider nothing impossible; every man has his time, and everything has its place.

6

Rabbi Elieser ben Simon once rode along the bank of a river in gleeful pride, for he had just come out of the lecture-room where he had distinguished himself by his learning. There met him a notoriously misshapen fellow. He greeted the Rabbi kindly, but the latter did not return the salutation, but called out haughtily: "How very handsome you are, my friend! Are any of your fellow-citizens as well-made as you?" The unknown one answered: "I do not know, but go to the Master who

created me and say to Him, What a horrible monster Thou hast created!" The Rabbi saw his error. Springing from his ass, he threw himself down before the man and begged his pardon. But the latter feeling hurt went on his way. The Rabbi, however, rode after him till he came to the man's home and besought him again for forgiveness. On the intercession of his fellow-citizens the injured man yielded. "I pardon you," he said, "on condition that you never repeat such a speech." Then the Rabbi hurried to the lecture-hall and taught: "Let man always be humble as the reed, and never proud like the cedar."

7

An imperial princess at Rome once mocked at the misgrown Rabbi Joshua ben Chan-anjah with these words: "A rich kernel of wisdom in an ugly shell!" The Rabbi thereupon asked her where her father's wine was preserved. "In earthen jars," said the princess. "How?" said the Rabbi. "Should not an emperor have his wine preserved in golden casks?" The princess admitted this, and caused her slaves to empty the wine into golden jars. But in a short time it turned sour. "You have given me bad advice," she said to the Rabbi when she met him again. But he replied: "It was only an answer to your mockery—A rich kernel of wisdom in an ugly shell."

Ben Soma said : " How much labour had the first men before they could eat even one piece of bread ! They were obliged themselves to plough, to sow, to reap, to bind into sheaves, to thresh, to winnow, to grind, to knead, and bake. But I find my bread and many precious kinds of food and drink without much labour. How the first men had to plague themselves to get even one single garment ! They had to shear, to bleach, to clean, to spin, to weave, to dye, to cut, and sew. But I find my comfortable garments ready, and I only need to put them on."

II

THE WORLD AND LIFE

I

ON three things the world stands: On knowledge, worship, and benevolence.

2

ON three things the world stands: On righteousness, truth, and peace.

3

THIS world is the vestibule of the future
Rest thyself in the vestibule, then mayest
thou enter the palace.

4

ONE hour of knowledge and of good works
in this world is more blessed than all the
joys of the future world.

5

THE honest guest—what does he say?
“How the master of the house has exerted
himself! How much wine, how much meat,
how much bread, has he served up! And

everything for my sake!" The unworthy guest—what does he say? "Why has the master of the house made such exertions? Why so much wine, so much meat, so much bread has he served up? And everything for his own sake!"

6

For a long time two schools disputed about the value of life. One asserted: "Existence is better than non-existence." The other: "Non-existence would be better than existence." Finally, they both agreed: "Non-existence is better than existence." But since man has been created, let him apply himself to good works.

7

When Rabbi Meir closed his lecture on the Book of Job, he began to say: "The end of man is to die, the end of the beast is to be killed; both go to meet death. Well for him who strives after learning, who desires to secure the goodwill of his Creator, who has won for himself a good name, and with a good name has passed out of the world. Of him the preacher in his wisdom says: 'A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth'" (Eccles. vii. 1).

8

Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Tryphon said: "If we had sat in the Court of Judgment,

the death punishment would never have been carried out."

9

Everything is predestined, yet the will is free. By kindness is the world regulated, yet everything depends on the works.

10

Men are like grass on the field: they grow up and wither away.

11

Man's life is fleeting, like the shadow of a bird in flight.

12

Envy, luxury, and ambition shorten life.

13

Spite, passion, and misanthropy hasten death.

14

Of three lives not one is really life: that of the passionate man, that of the soft-hearted, and that of the hard-hearted.

15

Four men are like dead persons in a living body: the poor, the blind, the leprous, the childless.

16

Of three lives not one is really life: that of the man who has to eat the bread of charity from a neighbour, that of the man who is afflicted with bodily sufferings, that of the man who is ruled by his wife.

17

The world is darkened to the man who has to eat the bread of charity from a neighbour.

18

No man dies and has the half of his wishes realised.

19

Everything is given on security, and a net is spread for all living. The booth stands open, the merchant lends. The book lies outspread, the hand writes, whoever wishes to borrow let him come and borrow. But the collectors go constantly round about and get paid by the man with or without his knowledge, and they have good vouchers for the debt, but there is a righteous judgment, and all are invited to the meal.

20

Better that one should kill you than that you should kill others. Your blood is not redder than the blood of your neighbour.

21

Be thou the cursed—not he who curses. Be of them that are persecuted—not of them that persecute. Look at Scripture : there is not a single bird more persecuted than the dove ; yet God has chosen her to be offered upon His altar. The bull is hunted by the lion, the sheep by the wolf, the goat by the tiger. And God said : “ Bring me a sacrifice, not from them that persecute, but from them that are persecuted.”

22

No man is to be made responsible for words which he utters in his grief.

23

One eats, another says grace.

24

He who is ashamed will not easily commit sin. There is a great difference between him who is ashamed before himself and he who is only ashamed before others. It is a good sign in a man to be capable of being ashamed. One contrition in a man's heart is better than many flagellations.

25

If our ancestors were like angels, we are like men ; if our ancestors were like men, we are like asses.

26

The soldiers fight, and the kings are the heroes.

27

"And God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good" (Gen. i. 31), and "God created everything in its proper season" (Eccles. iii. 11). That means, He created worlds upon worlds, and destroyed them one after the other, until He created this world. He then said: "This pleases me, the others did not." "In its proper season," that means, it was not meet to create *this* world until now.

28

This world is like a roadside inn, but the world to come is like the real home.

29

For the righteous there is no rest, neither in this world nor in the next, for they go, say the Scriptures, from host to host, from striving to striving: they will see God in Zion (Ps. lxxxiv. 7).

30

In the next world there will be no eating, no drinking, no love and no labour, no envy, no hatred, no contest. The righteous will sit with crowns on their heads, glorying in the splendour of God's majesty.

III

YOUTH AND AGE

I

YOUTH is a garland of roses ; age is a crown of thorns.

2

Children would like to be old ; the old would like to be children.

3

Alas for that which one loses and never finds again : youth !

4

The old man for counsel ; the youth for war.

5

He is old who possesses wisdom.

6

The pulling down of the old is building ; the building of youth is destruction.

7

Be complaisant towards men of rank ; be
pleasing towards youth.

8

The heart that loves is always young.

9

Sins of youth make the countenance hate-
ful in old age.

IV

FORTUNE AND MIS- FORTUNE

I

FORTUNE is a wheel which revolves quickly.

2

The stars of heaven weep with him who weeps by night.

3

Adversity tries the reins and proves the hearts of men.

4

He walks calmly who has the peace of God within his heart, however wildly the dogs of adversity may bark behind him.

5

Misfortunes do not come to the just man : to him they are angels of God laden with blessing.

6

Adversity reveals our inward strength, while prosperity softens our nature, and weakens our will.

7

Let not care enter thy heart, for care has murdered many.

8

Be not anxious about the morrow ; you do not know what to-day will bring.

9

He who has some bread in his basket and says : " What shall I eat to-morrow ? " belongs to those of little faith.

10

Three things brighten life : a beautiful woman, a beautiful dwelling, and beautiful furniture.

11

Three kinds of people owe their misfortune to themselves : He who lends out money without witness (or receipt) ; he who lets himself be ruled by his wife ; he who voluntarily gives himself up to bondage. What is meant by the last ? He who assigns away all his means during his lifetime to his children.

12

A certain sage was walking in a market-place when he suddenly encountered the prophet Elijah, and asked him who out of the vast crowd would be saved. Whereupon the prophet first pointed out a weird-looking creature, a turnkey, because he was merciful

to his prisoners, and next two common-looking workmen, walking in the crowd and pleasantly chatting. The sage instantly rushed to them and asked them what were their saving works. But they much puzzled replied: "We are but poor workmen who live by our trade; all that can be said for us is that we are always of good cheer, and are good-natured. When we meet anybody who seems sad we join him, and we talk to him, and cheer him, so long that he must forget his grief. And if we know of two people who have quarrelled, we talk to them and persuade them, until we have made them friends again. This is our whole life."

V

RICHES AND POVERTY

I

CONTENTMENT is true riches.

2

Who is rich? He who enjoys his riches.

3

Money puts a man on his feet (fills him with self-consciousness).

4

Poverty runs after the poor and riches after the rich.

5

When the coffer is empty quarrels arise.

6

Noah's dove said to God: "Let my food be bitter as an olive-leaf out of Thy hands, and not sweet as honey from the hands of man."

7

Observe the children of the poor, for from them will knowledge arise.

8

Only the ignorant is really poor.

9

The house that does not open to the poor
shall open to the physician.

10

Honour the sons of the poor : it is they
who bring knowledge into splendour.

11

After the thief runs the theft ; after the
beggar poverty.

12

When the ox is down, many are the
butchers.

13

One ought to consider the poor.

14

Rather eat onions and sit in the shadow,
and do not eat geese and poultry if it make
thy heart uneasy within thee.

15

When the end of a man is come, every-
body lords it over him.

VI

WISDOM AND FOOLISHNESS

I

WHO is wise? He who learns from everybody.

2

A wise man is more than a prophet.

3

If any man says to thee: "I have sought wisdom and not found it," believe it not; or "I have not sought it and found it," believe it not; or "I have sought it and found it," then believe it.

4

Seven qualities adorn the wise man: He does not speak first when a greater is present; he interrupts no one who is speaking; he does not answer hastily; he asks and answers becomingly; he treats one thing after the other in their order; concerning that which he has no knowledge of he con-

fesses : "I do not know" ; he acknowledges his mistakes. The opposite of all this is found with the fool.

5

To what may the man be compared who is more wise than virtuous? To a tree which has many branches and few roots. If a violent storm comes, it is torn up and falls (Sec. ix. 30).

6

Raba used to say : "Piety and good works must be the fruit of wisdom."

7

Rabbi Johanan says (in reference to Deut. xxx. 12) : "Wisdom is not in heaven—that is to say, not to be found among the proud, nor beyond the sea—that is to say, you will not find it among traders and travelling merchants."

8

A heathen once came to the Scribe Schammai and said : "I will become a Jew on one condition, that you teach me the law as long as I can stand on one foot." Schammai took a stave and drove the mocker forth. He then went to Hillel and said the same. "My son," said Hillel, "do not to your neighbour what you do not wish him to do to you." That is the whole law ; all the rest is commentary.

9

Rabbi Akiba said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself—that is the greatest commandment in the Bible (Lev. xix. 18).

10

Ben Asai added: "I know a still greater—It is the book of the generations of mankind" (whence the brotherhood of all men is inferred, whereas under "neighbour" an Israelite alone was meant).

11

Rabbi Samalai taught, saying: "Moses gave to the Israelites 613 commandments to be obeyed. Then came David and embraced them all in eleven, for it is said (Ps. xv.): 'Lord who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.' Then came Isaiah and reduced them to six, for it is said (Isaiah xxxiii.

15-16): 'He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil: he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.' Then came Micah and reduced them to three (Micah vi. 8): 'He hath shewed thee O man what is good, what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.' At last came Habakkuk who concluded them all in one word (Hab. ii. 4): 'The just shall live by his faith.'"

12

Moral deflections are more to be punished than deflections in ritual.

13

Be not like those servants who serve their master for the sake of reward; but be like those servants who serve their master without expecting reward.

14

Be strong as the tiger, light as the eagle, swift as the stag, and bold as the lion, to do the will of thy Father in heaven.

15

Before God a good intention is as the deed.

16

A sin committed with a good intention is better than a good work done from a wrong motive.

17

To the man who applies himself to the attainment of knowledge from a noble motive, his knowledge will be as the balm of life, but a deadly poison to him who strives after it from an ignoble motive.

18

But let a man always apply himself to knowledge even from an ignoble motive, for in time he will so love it that he will pursue it from a noble motive.

19

The Rabbis of Jamnia used to say: "I am a creature of God, and my neighbour also. I work in the city, he works in the field. I go every morning to my business, he to his. I may as little boast in my work as he in his. Ought I to be proud of the fact that I can accomplish more (for the common good) than he? Never. Whether much or little if the will is but good."

20

Eye and heart are the brokers of sin.

21

"Blessed be thou in thy coming in and in thy going out." That means, may thy

going out of the world be like thy coming into the world. As thou camest into the world without sin, so mayest thou depart out of the world without sin.

22

Antoninus asked our holy Rabbi: "In the hour when a man dies and the body perishes how can the Holy One—praised be His name!—place the man before the judgment seat? (for the body, the seat of sin, has been destroyed)" then said the Rabbi to him: "Before you ask me about the body which is unclean, ask me rather about the soul which is pure. Hear this parable: 'A certain king had a beautiful park. In it were beautiful fruits. And he placed two watchmen there, and the one was lame and the other was blind. Then said the lame man to the blind: "I see beautiful fruits in the park; come take me on your shoulders and we will fetch them and eat them." The lame man mounted the shoulders of the blind man, and they fetched and consumed them. After some time the owner of the park came. He said to them: "Where are the beautiful fruits?" Then the lame man said to him: "Have I limbs to walk?" Then said the blind man to him: "Have I eyes to see?"' What did the owner do? He caused the lame man to mount the shoulders of the blind man, and then he judged them both together as one.

Likewise will the Holy One—praised be His name!—bring the soul and place it in the body and then judge them both together, for it is said : ‘He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people’ (Ps. l. 4). ‘He shall call to the heavens above,’ that means the soul, ‘and to the earth that he may judge His people,’ that means the body.”

23

There are three crowns : the law, the priesthood, and kingship ; but the crown of a good name outshines them all.

24

Let men be cunning in the fear of God.

25

Woe to the oppressor and woe to his neighbour ! Well to the righteous and well to his neighbour !

26

If anyone steals a measure of wheat, grinds it and bakes it, and gives a part to the priest, what blessing will the priest pronounce ? None, for that would be no praise of God but slandering of God.

27

“Hand in hand ! Never will the evil persons remain unpunished.” What does that mean ? He who steals with one hand

and give alms with the other will not remain unpunished.

28

Three persons are loved by God : The man who does not get angry, the man who does not become intoxicated, and the man who is generous.

29

Three persons deserve God's favour : A young man who lives in the city and is not dissolute ; a poor man who finds a treasure and restores it to its owner ; a rich man who secretly pays tithes of his income.

30

When a man dies, neither silver, nor gold, nor pearls, nor jewels accompany him, but only his piety and his good works. As it is said : "When thou goest it will lead thee, (that is, when thou journeyest in the pilgrimage of life) ; when thou liest down it will protect thee (that is, when thou liest down to die) ; and when thou awakest, it will speak for thee (that is when thou awakest to everlasting life)." A man had three friends. The first he did not esteem highly, the second he esteemed more highly, the third he esteemed most of all. One day the king summoned him into his presence. Then the man was alarmed for he heard that he had to answer some severe charges. He went to the first friend and begged him to accompany him to

the king and be his intercessor ; but he refused to accompany him. He went to the second and made the same request but he said : " I will accompany you as far as the king's palace but not a step farther." Sad and depressed he went to the third who expressed his readiness to go with him and present his case before the king. The three friends are : Riches, relatives, piety.

31

No man sins unless a spirit of foolishness has entered into him.

32

He who has committed a sin twice considers it no longer a sin.

33

The sinful thought is worse than the sinful deed.

34

Man ought to avoid temptation. It is not the mouse that is the thief but the hole.

35

The lion roars not at a heap of straw but at a heap of flesh. A man caused his son to bathe and anoint himself ; he bestowed on him good food and good drink ; he gave him a purse of gold and then led him before the door of a house of frivolity. Can anything else happen than that he should be caught

in the arms of vice? Thus does luxury lead men to sin.

36

Believe not in thyself till thou art dead. Have three things before thy eyes, so that thou mayest not sin: thy humble origin, thy mournful end, the eternal judgment.

37

Rabbi Meir once prayed for the death of his wicked neighbour. When his wife heard it she said: "It is written, 'Let sins be destroyed from the earth and there shall be no more mockers.' Holy Scripture does not wish the destruction of sinners but of sins, so that there may be no more mockers. Man ought not to beseech God for the destruction of the bad, but rather for his reform."

38

Two men God hates: The man who speaks other than he thinks, and the man who can give testimony in court to secure the release of an innocent person and yet withholds it.

39

Four men the mind cannot understand: A proud poor man, an avaricious rich man, a vicious old man, and a haughty official (for he is only the servant of others).

40

From four men God turns aside: From the mocker, the liar, the hypocrite and the slanderer.

41

"Repent one day before thy death!" Thus spoke Elieser in the midst of his disciples. "Do we then know when we shall die?" asked a disciple. "Therefore," replied the Rabbi, "ought a man day by day to apply himself to perfection."

42

Neither sackcloth nor fasting avail, but reform and good works. Thus, it is not said of the Ninivites: "God saw their sackcloth and fasting, but: God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways" (Jonah iii. 10).

43

One ought not to taunt a reformed sinner of his earlier life.

44

"Let thy garments be always white" (Eccles. ix. 8). When does this mean? It refers to purity of soul. A king once invited his servants to a feast, but appointed no time. The wise washed their festal garments and held themselves ready. The foolish thought: It will be time enough when the king calls us. Suddenly the call of the king went forth.

The wise appeared in clean garments, but the foolish in dirty clothes. Then the king praised the former, but he was angry at the latter. He caused the wise to sit at his table, but the foolish had to suffer the displeasure of the king.

45

A wicked inclination is at first a guest. If thou grant it hospitality it will soon make itself master of the house.

46

An evil impulse is at first thin as a spider's web, but it soon becomes strong as a cart-rope.

47

The greater a man is, the greater is his sorrow.

48

Study is balm against sorrow. If that hateful thing assails thee, draw it into the house of learning. If it is a stone, it will be ground to powder; if it is iron, it will be split into shivers.

49

Adorn thyself before thou wilt adorn others. Take first the beam out of thy teeth, then say to thy neighbour: "Remove the splinter from thine eye."

50

A man notices the weaknesses of others, but not his own.

51

Drink not to excess and sin not.

52

Look not at the bottle, but on its contents.

53

Wine elevates the noble ; it degrades the low person.

54

When the wine is in, the secret slips out.

55

Wine cheers the heart of man, but only for a little while.

56

At the first glass—a lamb ; at the second glass—a lion ; at the third glass—a swine.

57

He who can endure barley bread shall eat no wheaten bread.

58

It is a good sign when a man is modest. Modesty leads to the fear of God. He who is modest does not easily sin. A man lacking modesty will certainly stumble through sin.

59

Boldness leads to hell ; modesty to paradise. Be modest before thyself, still more before others.

VII

LABOUR AND TRADE

I

LOVE labour, hate ambition, was the motto of Rabbi Schemaja.

2

"Great is labour for she brings her master to honour," says another. "Great is labour for she warms her master," says another. "She nourishes her master," says another.

3

Learning without a calling is ruinous, and leads to sin.

4

He who does not teach his son a trade trains him to be a highway robber.

5

Flay dead cattle on the highway, and do not say: "I am a priest"; or, "I am a great man and cannot abide the task."

6

God has so ordered matters that every artisan likes his trade, so that no trade may die out.

7

A certain Simeon from the village of Sichnin (in the time of Christ) was a skilled digger of ditches and wells, much in request in Jerusalem. He said one day to Rabbi Johanan ben Zaccai, the disciple of Hillel: "I am as great a man as you." The great Rabbi asked: "How so?" "Because," said he, "I am no less necessary to the Commonwealth than you. If a man comes to you and asks after ceremonially clean drinking water, you say to him: 'Drink out of this fountain, for its waters are pure and cold'; or if a woman asks you where there is good water for bathing, you say to her: 'Bathe in this or that tank, for its waters cleanse from impurity.'" (Simeon was as necessary to the observation of the Jewish laws of purification as were any of the Rabbis.)

8

When a young man came one day to Rabbi Ishmael, he asked him: "My son, what is thy calling?" He answered: "I am a scribe." And Ismael exclaimed: "Then be conscientious, my son, for thus is it a divine labour."

9

There is no handicraft which is not necessary to the world; but happy is he whose parents have set him an example by choosing an excellent calling.

10

Let a man hire himself out even for the most repulsive work, and he will need no one's help.

11

Even when the seven lean years came, they did not cross the artisan's threshold.

12

Rather serve in the temple of an idol than take alms.

13

Workmen at their craft do not need to rise when a learned man passes by.

14

He who inspects his goods every day will find a piece of gold.

15

"Didst thou ever see in all thy life," says Rabbi Simeon, son of Elazar, "a bird or an animal working at a craft? And yet these creatures made simply for the purpose of serving me, gain their living without difficulty. But I am created to serve my Creator; and if those who are created to serve me can gain their livelihood without difficulty, shall not I who am made to serve my Creator, earn my living without trouble? It is assuredly only by evil courses that I lose my means of support."

16

The bits of wool which fall off the stuff when the fuller is soaking it, belong to him ; but those which come away when the carder combs it, belong to the owner. The three threads which the clothmaker sets in the salvage, and the fuller draws out, belong to the fuller, all the rest to the owner. But if there are black threads bordering the white stuff, the fuller may keep them for himself when he has taken them out, since black does not look well on white. If the tailor has a needleful of thread left, or a piece of stuff three fingers square, they belong to the owner. The carpenter's plane shavings belong to him. The splinters from his axe belong to the owner ; but if he works in the owner's house, even the sawdust belongs to the owner.

17

Let no man make his son a donkey-driver, camel-driver, barber, boatman, shepherd, or huckster, for these are thievish callings.

18

Donkey-drivers are for the most part godless. Camel-drivers (despite the temptation to appropriate other people's goods which their life on the highways brings), are mostly honest. Boatmen (because of the dangers they incur), mostly pious. The best of doctors is ripe for hell (because of the

material views of life incidental to the profession, and their frequently preferring of the rich to the poor); and the most honourable of butchers is the comrade of Amalek (since he is not to be trusted about the quality of his meat).

19

The scribe shall not go out (*i.e.* towards evening on Friday) with his pen behind his ear, nor the dyer with his patterns in his ear, nor the money-changer with the devarius in his ear (the marks of their trade or profession).

20

If thou hast taken up God's trade (the study of the Word of God) put on His livery also! (be charitable).

21

Greater is he who derives his livelihood from work than he who fears God.

VIII

HOW MAN WORKS AND GOD WORKS

I

RABBI SIMON GAMALIEL said: "Come and behold how different are the ways of the Holy One—praised be His name!—from the ways of flesh and blood. Flesh and blood heals the bitter with sweet, but the Holy One—praised be His name!—heals the bitter with bitter. How is that? He put something that is disagreeable into something that was already disagreeable. For it is said: "And when they came to Marah they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore the name of it was called Marah—and the Lord showed (Moses) a tree which, when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet" (Ex. xv. 23-25).

2

The way and manner of flesh and blood is: the fear of man extends more to those who are distant than to those who are near. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—is

not so: the fear of Him extends more to those who are near than to those who are distant; for it is said: "I will be sanctified on them that come nigh me" (Lev. x. 3). And: "It shall be very tempestuous round about Him" (Ps. l. 3). And it also says: "O Lord God of hosts who is a strong Lord like unto Thee? or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee?" (Ps. lxxxix. 8).

3

The way and manner of flesh and blood is: if a man works with a master, he must plough with him, sow with him, weed with him, delve with him. Then the master gives him his wages, and he goes his way. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—is not so: a man has a desire for children: He gives them to him; for it is said: "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord" (Ps. cxxvii. 3). If a man has a desire for wisdom, God gives it him; for it is said: "For the Lord giveth wisdom" (Prov. ii. 6). If a man has a desire for power, God gives it him; for it is said: "Both riches and honour come of thee" (1 Chron. xxix. 12).

4

The way and manner of flesh and blood is: when he builds, he builds the lowest part first and then the highest. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—builds first the highest part and then the lowest;

for it is said: "In the beginning God created the heaven," and then—"and the earth" (Gen. i. 1).

5

The way and manner of flesh and blood is: when he layeth beams, he layeth them with wood and earth. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—layeth the beams of His world with water; for it is said: "Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters" (Ps. civ. 3).

6

The way and manner of flesh and blood is: he cannot make a picture with water. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—can mould a picture (shape) with water; for it is said: "Hast Thou not poured me out as milk?" (Job. x. 10). The way and manner of flesh and blood is: he cannot make a shape out of dust. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—made a shape out of dust; for it is said: "When I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth" (Ps. cxxxix. 15). The way and manner of flesh and blood is: when he sets about to make a figure, he begins with the head, or with the limbs, and after that he completes it. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—completes it all at once; for it is said: "He is the Former of all" (Jer. x. 16). And in another place it says:

"Neither is there any rock like our God"
(1 Sam. ii. 2).

7

The way and manner of flesh and blood is: he goes to the artist and says to him: "Make me the picture of my father." He replies: "Let your father come here and stand before me, or bring me a copy of your father's likeness, then I will complete the picture." But the Holy One—praised be His name!—is not so. From a drop of water he makes a figure which resembles the picture of his father.

8

A king of flesh and blood goes forth to war, and the neighbouring provinces come and demand what they need of him. He says to them: "I am provoked. I go now to war. If I am victorious and return, then come and ask of me. But the Holy One—praised be His name!—is not so: "The Lord is a Man of War," for He fights with the Egyptians, and "the Lord is His name" (Ex. xv. 3); for He hears the cries of all who come into the world; for it is said: "Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come" (Ps. lxxv. 2).

9

A king of flesh and blood who stands in the battle cannot approach his soldiers, and their camp, and care for all his army. But

the Holy One—praised be His name!—is not so. Rather, “the Lord is a man of war” for He fights with the Egyptians. And yet, “The Lord is His name, for He nourishes and provides for all who come into the world”; for it is said: “He divided the Red Sea into parts, for His mercy endureth for ever. Who giveth food to all flesh, for his mercy endureth for ever” (Ps. cxxxvi. 13, 25).

10

The Holy One—praised be His name!—heals all who come into the world; for it is said: “For I am the Lord, that healeth thee” (Ex. xv. 26). And it also says: “Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved” (Jer. xvii. 14). And in another place it is said: “Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings” (Jer. iii. 22).

11

Come and behold! The healing of the Holy One—praised be His name!—is not like the healing of flesh and blood. In the healing by flesh and blood, a man cannot heal with that by which he wounds, for he wounds with a knife and heals with a plaster. But with the Holy One—praised be His name!—it is not so, for He heals with that by which He wounds. And when He afflicted Job, He did so only by a tempest,

for it is said: "For He breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause" (Job ix. 17). And when He healed him, He healed him only by a tempest; for it is said: "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind"—that is, He answered him out of the whirlwind and healed him (Job xxxviii. 1).

IX

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

I

CHILDREN under six years are too young for instruction.

2

Children should be chastised only with a shoe-lace.

3

One blow with the tongue that touches the heart is more effectual than much beating.

4

If one has promised anything to a child, one should keep the promise : otherwise the child learns to lie.

5

The instruction of youth may not be disturbed even to build a temple.

6

Scholars exhibit various qualities. Some grasp easily and easily forget. Some grasp

with difficulty and forget with difficulty. Some grasp with difficulty and easily forget. Some grasp easily and with difficulty forget.

7

“They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars” (Dan. xii. 3). Teachers are referred to here.

8

Truly that man deserves always to be mentioned with glory. His name is Joshua, son of Gamala. If it had not been for him knowledge among us would have been utterly forgotten. In former times people followed the command of Scripture: “Ye shall teach your children.” But then children who had no father to teach them grew up without instruction. Then at last schools were established in Jerusalem, and later in the provinces also. But Joshua, son of Gamala, arranged for the establishment of schools, and the appointment of teachers in all places.

9

The practice of knowledge is more than sacrifice. He who devotes himself to knowledge needs neither whole burnt offerings, nor peace offerings, nor sin offerings, nor trespass offerings.

10

Even a heathen who devotes himself to learning is to be esteemed equally with a

high-priest. For it is said : " These are the doctrines which a man should practise." It does not say : " Priests, Levites, or Israelites, but man—every man."

11

Knowledge is more than priesthood and the dignity of kings.

12

Rabbi Jose ben Kisma related the following :—" Once a man met me on the road. After we had greeted he asked me whence I came. I answered : ' From a great city in which very many scholars and wise men live.' Then he said : ' Rabbi, you might like to come to my place ; I would willingly share with you my great riches.' But I answered : ' Even if you offered me all the treasures of the world, I would prefer to dwell only in a place of knowledge and learning. The Psalmist says : " The words of Thy mouth are more than thousands of silver and gold "' (Ps. cxix. 72).

13

Rabbi Nechunja Ben-Hakana, when he came out of the school, used to pray : " I thank Thee, Lord my God, that my part has been allotted me among those that visit the schools, and not among the idlers at street corners. I rise early, and they rise early ; I busy myself early in the morning

with the words of the 'Thora,' and they with vanities; I work, and they work; I work and receive my reward; they labour and receive none; I run, and they run; I hasten toward life eternal, and they toward the bottomless pit."

14

A saying believed to have been traditional among the teachers of Jabne (Jamnia) is: "I am the creature of God, and so is my fellowman; my calling is in the town, and his in the fields; I go early to my work, and he to his; he does not boast of his labour, nor I of mine; and if thou wouldest say, 'I accomplish great things, and he little things,' we have learned that whether a man accomplish great things or small, his reward is the same if only his heart be set on heaven" (Sec. vi. 19).

15

The mother's breast is the emblem of knowledge. As often as the infant lays hold of it he finds fresh nourishment. Thus does knowledge also create new thoughts as often as one applies oneself to it.

16

If thou hast attained knowledge what lackest thou? If thou lackest knowledge what hast thou attained?

17

Knowledge demands peace in the world.

18

Rabbi Johanan went from Tiberias to Sephoris; a young man accompanied him. They passed a great estate, and Rabbi Johanan said: "This estate was once my property. I sold it in order to apply myself to study." His companion could not comprehend such an action. "Friend!" said Rabbi Johanan, "how should I not give up what was created in one day for that which was given in forty days?"

19

A learned bastard will go before an ignorant high-priest.

20

Who is better, he who knows much or he who is sharp-witted? The first. But each needs a grain of wheat.

21

Even the everyday conversation of scholars must be understood.

22

When thou seest a learned man sinning at night, think not hardly of him next day, for perhaps he has repented—or rather, he has certainly repented.

23

Let thy house be a meeting-place of the wise ; soil thyself with the dust of their feet, and drink in their words like a thirsty man.

24

It is not becoming in a scholar to go out with patched shoes. A scholar who goes about in dirty clothes degrades learning.

25

What is the relation of a man of culture to a coarse man? Before the cultured man has spoken to him, he is in his eyes a golden chalice. When he has spoken to him, he is still only a silver cup. But when he has eaten and drunk with him, he is nothing but an earthen vessel, which easily breaks and never can be restored.

26

Be not wanting in respect for an old man once learned but now not knowing much on account of his great age. Even in the holy mount the broken tables of the law lay near the others.

27

Make not knowledge a crown for boasting, neither make a spade of it in order that you may dig.

28

Let no man resolve : I will dedicate myself to study in order to secure the title of

a wise man, a scholar, and attain dignity. But let him study out of love for knowledge ; honour will come of itself in good time.

29

The chief thing is not knowledge, but the use to which it is put.

30

To what shall we liken a man who places knowledge above virtue? To a tree with many branches and few roots : a storm comes and lays it on the ground. To what shall we liken a man who places virtue above knowledge? To a tree with few branches and many roots : all the storms of the world cannot overthrow it (Sec. vi. 5).

31

Woe to the scholars who are not virtuous ! Woe to him who has no dwelling and builds himself a portal !

32

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." This also means : "Thou shalt make the name of God loved," and this especially applies to scholars. If a scholar practises pleasant intercourse with men, conducts himself well, is conscientious in money matters, what do men say? "Well for him that he has acquired knowledge ! Honour to his father and his teacher. Woe to men who

have learned nothing! Behold how knowledge ennobles a man." But if the conduct of a scholar is despicable then men say the opposite, and knowledge is degraded.

33

If thou has learned much do not count much on that, for it is thy destiny.

34

Knowledge is often compared to water. As water flows off and withdraws from high places, so knowledge can only flourish among modest men.

35

What does the verse mean: "It is not in heaven?" It means that knowledge does not bear itself proudly and haughtily.

36

Rabbi Abahu and Rabbi Chia once delivered lectures at a foreign place. The latter treated a strictly scientific theme: the former gave an edifying lecture. The public flocked in large numbers to the former, but the latter had to speak before empty benches. At this Rabbi Chia was much downcast. But Rabbi Abahu said to him: "I will tell thee a parable. 'Two traders came to one place. The one sold genuine pearls and jewels; the other sold pretty pebbles and glass pearls. Knowest thou who finds most

buyers? He who offers glass pearls and coloured pebbles cheaply.’”

37

Rabbi Gamaliel and Rabbi Joshua were on board a ship. Rabbi Joshua showed off his great learning, so that Rabbi Gamaliel said : “ So learned art thou, and must have endured great toil ! ” Whereupon he said : “ Instead of wondering at me, wonder at those two scholars, Johanan and Elieser, who know every drop of water in the sea, and yet have scarcely a piece of dry bread and one good garment.” Then Rabbi Gamaliel resolved to bestow upon them a high office, and sent for them when he had returned home again. But they being too modest to wish to hold any office did not come. But Rabbi Gamaliel sent this message to them : “ Do not think that I confer any honour on you. I rather ask a difficult service from you. To the conscientious man office is more a burden than a dignity.”

38

This is the way to acquire knowledge : thou must eat bread with salt, thou must drink water, sleep on the ground, and lead a laborious life. If thou doest this it shall be health and wealth to thee.

39

He alone possesses knowledge who knows that he knows nothing.

40

The older a scholar grows the greater becomes his wisdom. The older an ignorant man grows the greater becomes his foolishness.

41

He who learns in youth—to what shall he be likened? To a writing on new paper. And to what who learns in old age? To a writing on gilded paper. To whom shall we liken the man who learns from boys? To one who eats unripe grapes and drinks wine from the wine press. And to whom who learns from old men? To one who enjoys ripe grapes and drinks old wine.

42

Ye wise men and teachers be careful in your lectures! How easily may your words be misunderstood when ye are no more! Let the teacher always give his instruction briefly and concisely.

43

If thou seest a scholar who belabours his theme as if it were heavy as steel, it is evident that his teacher does not instruct him kindly.

44

Why is knowledge compared to wood? As a small piece of wood kindles a greater

piece, so men of limited intellect may quicken great minds.

45

Much have I learned from my teachers, more from my companions, most of all from my pupils.

46

The scholar who does not teach is like the myrtle in the wilderness.

47

As iron sharpeneth iron, so minds sharpen minds.

48

Rabbi Jehudah thus advised his pupil Samuel: "Open thy mouth and read, open thy mouth and study; for only by living speech is study advanced."

49

The scholars in Judea who looked to correct speech prospered in study. The scholars in Galilee, who despised correctness of speech did not prosper.

50

Where system is wanting in study, apprehension is difficult.

51

He who studies and does not repeat is like one who sows and does not reap.

52

First learn, then think independently.

53

One may divide students into four classes. They resemble the sponge, the funnel, the refiner, and the sieve. The sponge absorbs everything. The funnel lets it go in at one side and out at the other. The refiner lets the wine out and retains the lees. But the sieve lets the dust through and keeps the grain.

54

Let thy pupil's honour be as precious to thee as thine own, the honour of thy comrade as that of thy teacher, the honour of thy teacher as that of heaven.

55

Honour everyone as a teacher from whom thou hast learned something.

56

What one has heard from another may only be repeated in the name of the author.

57

The educator deserves the name of father more than the parent.

58

Above all things study ; whether for the sake of learning or for any other reason,

study. For whatever the motives that impel thee at first, thou wilt very soon love study for its own sake.

59

Thou shouldest revere the teacher even more than thy father. The latter only brought thee into this world; the former indicates the way into the next. But blessed is the son who has learned from his father! he shall revere him both as his father and his master; and blessed is the father who has instructed his son!

60

Rabbi Hillel said: "Whosoever does not increase in knowledge, decreases." Also: "Whosoever tries to make gain by the crown of learning, perishes."

61

Rabbi Hillel said: "Be a disciple of Aaron, a friend of peace, a promoter of peace, a friend of all men, and draw them near unto the law."

62

The Scripture says: "He shall live by them" (the laws); that means he shall not die through them. They shall not be made pitfalls or burdens to him that shall make him hate life.

63

The law has been given to men, and not to angels.

64

He who carries out these precepts to the full is declared to be nothing less than a saint.

65

There was a famine in the land, and stores of corn were placed under the care of Rabbi Jehudah, the Holy, to be distributed to those only who were skilled in the knowledge of the law. And behold, there came a man, Jonathan the son of Amram, and loudly demanded his portion. The Rabbi asked him if he knew the condition, and had fulfilled it, and then the suppliant changed his tone and said: "Nay, but feed me as a dog is fed, who eats of the crumbs of the feast," and the Rabbi hearkened to his words, and gave him of the corn.

X

RELIGION AND WORSHIP

I

HUMILITY and good works are better than all sacrifices.

2

Without a devotional gathering one cannot pray. Prayer without devotion is a body without soul.

3

If anyone prays, and at the same winks with his eye or motions with his finger, of him it may be said : "On Me thou hast not called !"

4

In the House of God everything ought to be beautiful.

5

One should not leave the House of God with hurried step.

6

How should one keep feast-days? One half to the Lord and one half to self.

7

Keep the Sabbath as a work day, rather than be obliged to accept alms.

8

Alexander Jannäus counselled his wife: "Be not afraid of the Pharisees nor of the Sadducees, but of pretenders who act like Zimri, and wish to be rewarded like Phinehas."

9

A philosopher once asked Rabbi Gamaliel: "It is written in your law, 'for the Lord thy God is a jealous God.' Has idolatry then power that He should be jealous of it? A strong man is jealous only of a strong man! a wise man is jealous only of a wise man! a rich man is jealous only of a rich man! Therefore idolatry must still have strength in order that one must be jealous of it." Then said Rabbi Gamaliel: "When a man calls his dog by the name of his father, as soon as he has occasion to swear he uses this form of oath—'By the life of this dog!' Of whom must the father be jealous then? of the son or of the dog?" Then answered the philosopher: "One part has still its use." Then said Rabbi Gamaliel to him: "On what ground?" Then said he to the philosopher: "Behold, it once happened that a fire took place in a city and it was destroyed

with exception of the temple of the idol in the city. Is it not the fact that it was specially protected?" Then said Gamaliel to him: "Hear this parable: 'A king of flesh and blood goes out to make war. With whom does he fight? with the living or with the dead?'" The philosopher said to him: "With the living; but since you think idolatry is not even partly useful, why does not your God sweep it out of the world?" Then said Rabbi Gamaliel to him: "Do you worship only one thing? Behold, you worship the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, the mountains, the hills, the valleys, and even man. Shall God destroy the whole world for the sake of fools?"

10

He is superstitious who lays weight on time and hour, and says: "This day is favourable for a journey, that day will bring luck to the buyer; who considers it a bad sign when a piece of bread falls out of the mouth, or a stick out of the hand; or when a raven comes cawing towards him, or a stag runs across the road."

11

Once certain disciples kept the Sabbath in Jabne. But Rabbi Joshua did not keep the Sabbath there, and when his disciples came to him he said: "What new exposition of the law was given you in Jabne?" Then

said they to him : " We follow thee alone ; we listen to no exposition of the law by another." Then said he to them : " And which of the Rabbis has kept the Sabbath with you there ?" They said to him : " Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah." Then said he to them : " Is it possible that Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah has kept the Sabbath there without communicating to you a new exposition of the law ?" They said to him : " This chief rule he set before us : ' Ye stand this day, all of you before the Lord your God ; your little ones, your wives ' (Deut. xxix. 10-11). Do little children know how to distinguish between good and evil ? But in order to give a reward to those who bring them, in order to increase the reward of those who do His will, in order to fulfil what is said : ' The Lord is well-pleased for His righteousness ' sake ;' He will magnify the law and make it honourable." Then said Rabbi Joshua to them : " What an exposition of the law ! what could be newer than this ? Behold, I am now nearly seventy years old, and never till to-day have been honoured with such an exposition ! Hail to thee, O Abraham our father ! that Eleazar ben Azariah has sprung from thy loins ! That race is not orphaned in whose midst Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah dwells !"

12

Especially beloved must the sanctuary of the Holy One be ; for when the Holy One—praised be His name !—created His world, He created it with but one hand ; for it is said : “ Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth ” (Isa. xlviii. 13). But when He came to erect the sanctuary, He did it with both His hands ; for it is said : “ The sanctuary O Lord which Thy hands have established ” (Ex. xv. 17). When wilt Thou rebuild it with Thy two hands ?

13

A man's name is what he is, and describes his character. When Jacob said to the angel with whom he wrestled at the brook Jabbok : “ Tell me, I pray thee, thy name,” he meant, “ Tell me who thou art.” In like manner the name of the Lord is the Lord Himself, His very being and essence. Therefore when it is said : “ They that love His name ” (Ps. lxxix. 36) ; that means : “ that love the Lord.” And “ wherein have we despised Thy name ” (Mal. i. 6) ; that is, “ despised Thee.” Therefore the name of God must be hallowed, for that is God Himself.

14

It happened that the son of Rabbi Gamaliel was ill. The father sent two of his young disciples to Rabbi Chamina ben

Dosa that he might pray for the sick son. When Rabbi ben Dosa saw them, he went up to the balcony and prayed. On descending he said to the messengers: "Go! for the fever has left him." Then they said to him: "Art thou a prophet?" He answered: "I am no prophet, and I am not even the son of a prophet, but so far have I a tradition: when my prayer flows freely from my lips then I know that it is heard; if not, I know that I have been refused." Then they bowed themselves, and wrote down the exact hour. When they returned to Rabbi Gamaliel he said: "By the Temple service! ye have written down not a minute before or after, but the exact time when the fever left him, and he asked for water to drink."

15

Every nation has its special guardian angel, its horoscopes, its ruling planets and stars. But there is no planet for Israel. Israel shall look but to Him. There is no mediator between those who are called His children and their Father which is in heaven.

16

As God fills the whole universe, so the soul fills the whole body; as God sees and is not seen, so the soul sees and is not seen; as God nourishes the whole universe, so the soul nourishes the whole body; as God is pure, so the soul is pure.

17

Everything is the hands of God save the fear of God.

18

One hour of repentance is better than the whole world to come.

19

We read (Ex. xvii. 11) that in the battle with Amalek when Moses lifted up his arms Israel prevailed. Did Moses' hands make war or break war? But this is to show that as long as Israel are looking upwards and humbling their hearts before their Father who is in Heaven, they prevail; if not, they fall. In the same way we find (Num. xxi. 9) "Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole: and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Dost think that a serpent killeth or giveth life? But as long as Israel are looking upwards to their Father who is in Heaven they will live; if not, they will die.

20

"Has God pleasure in the meat and blood of sacrifices?" asks the prophet. No; He has not so much ordained as permitted them. It is for yourselves, He says, not for Me that you offer. Like a king who sees his son carousing daily with all manner of

evil companions: you shall henceforth eat and drink entirely at your will at my own table, he says. They offered sacrifices to demons and devils, for they loved sacrificing, and could not do without it. And the Lord said: "Bring your offerings to Me; you shall then, at least, offer to the true God."

21

He who sacrifices a whole offering shall be rewarded for a whole offering; he who offers a burnt offering shall have the reward of a burnt offering; but he who offers humility unto God and man shall be rewarded with a reward as if he had offered all the sacrifices in the world.

22

Prayer is Israel's only weapon, a weapon inherited from their fathers, a weapon tried in a thousand battles.

23

Even when the gates of heaven are shut to prayer, they are open to those of tears.

24

Hospitality is the most important part of divine worship.

25

Beat the gods and the priests will tremble.

26

For the sake of one righteous man, the whole world is preserved in existence; as it is written: "The righteous man is an everlasting foundation" (Prov. x. 25).

27

Rabbi Meyer saith: "Great is repentance, because for the sake of one that repenteth the whole world is pardoned"; as it is written: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him." It is not said "from them," but from him (Hos. xiv. 4).

28

There was once a man who used to go by the name of Nahum Gamza (Good-again), and he was so called because whatever befell him he always said: "This too is good! What God does is well done." He was once on a long and weary pilgrimage, and came to a little village, but could get no accommodation. So he retired to the forest, saying: "Whatever God does is well done." He had there a lamp, a fowl, and a donkey. He lighted the lamp to guide him, but the wind blew it out, and he was left in darkness. "Whatever God does is well done," he said. Next a wild cat came out of the thicket and carried off his bird. "Whatever God does is well done," he said again. Then a lion fell upon his donkey and slew it, and again

he repeated his faithful saying. On making his way into the village he found that brigands had appeared during the night and had robbed and then killed the few inhabitants. His heart was full of gratitude for his own preservation, and he felt that whilst it had been a great trouble to him to have had to take shelter in the forest during the night yet in this way he had escaped death; and also that if his lamp had continued shining, or the cock had crowed, or the donkey had brayed, the brigands might have found out his retreat. So Nahum Gamza was full of thankfulness and praise.

Be ye also thankful, for as then so now,
“Whatever God does is good.”

29

Rabbi Samai says: “If any man keep the law, and do the will of his Father in Heaven, behold, he is like unto the saints above.

30

A Rabbi once made the following request to Samuel ben Nachmani:—“I have heard that thou art a master of the Hagada; tell me then whence comes the light of the world?” He answered: “The Holy One—blessed be His name!—clothes Himself in a white robe, and the whole world shines with the splendour of His majesty.” This he said in a whisper, and the questioner rejoined: “Why, that is word for word the

expression of the Psalm (civ. 2): "Thou coverest Thyself with light as with a garment," and thou dost tell it to me as a secret. He answered: "I heard it as a secret, so I tell it as a secret."

31

Underneath the wings of the seraphim are stretched the arms of the Divine Mercy, ever ready to receive sinners.

XI

PARABLES

I

RABBI JOSE, the Galilean, said : " A certain man fell heir to a field in which one might sow a measure of wheat. But he sold it for a mere trifle. Then went the buyer and opened up wells and planted gardens and parks in it. Then the seller of the field began to be angry because he had given away his inheritance for a trifle."

Rabbi Simon ben Jochai said : " A certain man fell heir to a large field in the distant west. But he sold it for a mere trifle. Then went the buyer and digged in the field and found treasures of silver and treasures of gold and precious stones and pearls. Then the seller began to be angry."

In like manner was it with the Egyptians. They sent away the children of Israel and did not know what they had sent away.

2

Rabbi Jehudah said : " A certain man went on the road, and he placed his son in front

of him. Then robbers came and tried to carry him off a prisoner. Then the father took his son and placed him behind himself. Then a wolf came behind to attack him. Then the father set his son in front of himself again. Then robbers came in front and wolves behind. Then he took his son and placed him in his arms. But the son began to feel pains because of the sun. Then his father spread his garment over him. When his son was hungry he gave him to eat, when he was thirsty he gave to him drink."

So did the Holy One—praised be His name!—for it is said: "I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by my arms, but they knew not that I healed them" (Hos. xi. 3). When the son began to suffer from the sun he spread his garment over him; for it is said: "He spread a cloud for a covering and fire to give light in the night." (Ps. cv. 39). When his son was hungry he gave him to eat; for it is said: "Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you." When he thirsted, he gave him to drink; for it is said: "He brought streams also out of the rock and caused waters to run down like rivers." And they were streams of living water; for it is said: "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters and streams from Lebanon" (Solomon's Song v. 15).

3

Rabbi Simon ben Eliazar said. "A certain king placed two overseers to guard his property. The one was put in charge of the straw and the other was put in charge of the silver and the gold. The one who was placed in charge of the straw acted dishonourably, and yet he grumbled that the king had not placed him in charge of the silver and gold. Then said the one intrusted with the latter: 'Thou good-for-nothing (*requa*, cf. St Matt. v. 22, *raca*) if thou hast been unfaithful with the straw how much more wouldst thou have been so with silver and gold.' In like manner if the children of Noah could not obey the seven commands which were given them how much less could they keep the 613 Commandments which are in the 'Thora'!"

4

A certain king sat in the judgment seat administering justice till it grew dark. And his sons remained with him till it was dark. When he left the judgment seat he took a lantern and lighted the way for his sons. But the great ones of the kingdom were at hand, and they said, "*we* will take the lantern and light the way for thy sons." But he said, "I do it not because I had no one to take the lantern and light the way for my sons, but behold I do it that I may make known my love for my sons, and that ye may act towards

them with respect." In like manner did the Holy One—praised be His name!—reveal to the nations of the world the love where-with He loved Israel, for He went in His own Person before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night that the nations might act with respect towards them.

5

A certain king had two gardens, the one standing within the other. He sold the inside one. Then the purchaser came in order to enter the inner garden. But the watchman would not allow him. Then the purchaser said to the watchman: "In the name of the king," but he obeyed not. Then he showed him the signet ring of the king, but he obeyed not. Finally the king himself came with the purchaser. When the king came the watcher began to flee. The owner said to him: "The whole day long I spoke to thee in the name of the king but thou wouldst not obey me, why dost thou now flee?" Then said the watchman to him: "Not for thee do I flee, but for the king."

In like manner Moses stood by the sea. Moses spoke to it in the name of the Holy One—praised be His name!—that it should divide, but it obeyed not. Then he showed it his rod, but it obeyed not. Finally the Holy One—praised be His name!—revealed Himself in His glory and His might. Then began the sea to flee; for it is said: "The

sea saw it and fled" (Ps. cxiv. 3). Then Moses said to it: "The whole day long I spoke to thee in the name of the Holy One—praised be His name!—but thou didst not obey me. Now, wherefore dost thou flee? What ailed thee O thou sea, that thou fleddest" (Ps. cxiv. 5). Then it said to him: "Not for thee, Son of Amram do I flee, but for the Lord, before whom the earth flees, from the God of Jacob, which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters" (Ps. cxiv. 7, 8).

6

There was once a dove which fled before a hawk, and it forced its way into the dining-hall of the king. Then the king opened the east window for it, and the dove flew out, and was saved. The hawk forced its way in after it. Then the king closed all the windows, and began to shoot at it with arrows.

In like manner when the last of the Israelites came up out of the sea, The first among the Egyptians went down into the sea. Then began the angels to shoot arrows at them, and hurl hailstones, fire and brimstone (Ezek. xxxviii. 22).

7

A certain king of flesh and blood came to a great city. He was surrounded by a body

of attendants, and heroes were at his right hand and his left, and armies went before him and behind him. All ask: "Who is the king?" They could not distinguish him because he was flesh and blood as they.

But the Holy One—praised be His name!—revealed Himself at the sea, since not one of them needed to ask: "Who is the king?" As soon as they saw Him they recognised Him, and began their song of praise: "He is my God" (Ex. xv. 2).

8

There was a certain king of flesh and blood who had two sons: the one was tall, and the other was short. He went into his chamber in the night. He said to the little one: "Wake me at sunrise"; but to the tall one he said: "Wake me at the third hour." Then the little one came to waken him at sunrise, but the older would not allow him, saying: "The king has told me to waken him at the third hour of the day." But the little one said to him: "He said to me at sunrise." While they stood there and cried at one another, the father awoke. He said to them: "My sons, you have both the intention to serve my honour, so will I not withhold your reward."

In like manner when the twelve tribes stood by the sea, the one said: "I will first go down into the sea." And another said: "I will first go down into the sea." While

they stood there crying at one another, the tribe of Benjamin leaped past and went first into the sea; for it is said: "There is little Benjamin with their ruler, the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali. Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which Thou hast wrought for us" (Ps. lxxviii. 27-28).

9

There was a certain man who said to his servant: "Go out and fetch me a fish from the market." He went out and brought him a fish, but it smelled. Then his master said to him: "I decide either that thou eat the fish, or that thou receive one hundred stripes, or that thou give me one hundred pounds." Then said the servant to him: "Behold, I will eat." He began to eat. But he was not able to eat to the end, and cried: "Let me be beaten." He received sixty stripes. But he was not able to hold out to the end, and cried: "Behold, I will pay one hundred pounds." Thus it came to pass that he ate the fish, received the stripes, and paid one hundred pounds.

In like manner was it with the Egyptians. They received punishment, they sent away the Israelites, and their money was taken from them; for it is said: "The heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said: Why

have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" (Ex. xiv. 5, and iii. 22).

10

There was a certain king whose son went into a far country. And the king went after him, and remained with him. Then the son went into another country, and the king went after him, and remained with him.

In like manner was it with the Egyptians. When they went down into Egypt the Shekinah was with them; for it is said: "I will go down with thee into Egypt." They went up to Palestine, the Shekinah was with them; for it is said: "I will also surely bring them up again" (Gen. xlv. 4). They went down into the sea, the Shekinah was with them; for it is said: "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed, and went behind them" (Ex. xiv. 19). They went out into the wilderness, the Shekinah was with them; for it is said: "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud," till they brought God with them into His sanctuary. And so it is said: "It was but a little while that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me" (Solomon's Song, iii. 4).

I I

"Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them" (Ex. xv. 12). To what shall this be likened? Unto a robber who entered and railed behind the palace of a king, saying: "If I find the son of the king, I will seize him, and kill him, and crucify him, and bring him to death in a horrible way."

In like manner Pharaoh entered and railed against the Israelites in the land of Egypt, saying: "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil" (Ex. xv. 9). But the Holy Scripture says: "Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them" (Ex. xv. 9-10). And it also says: "Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them."

I 2

There was a certain king who decreed that his son should not enter the palace with him. The son went in at the first door, and no one said anything. He went in at the second, and no one said aught. He went to the third door, when he was opposed. They said to him: "Enough! thus far shalt thou go and no farther."

In like manner when Moses had conquered the land of the two peoples, Sihon and Og, and had given it to the Reubenites, and Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh,

then said they to him : "It seems that the decree that we should not come into the land east of the Jordan has been given conditionally. Consequently, we shall only be punished conditionally."

13

A certain man went into a province and said to those who lived there : "I will be king over you." They said to him : "Hast thou ever done anything for us that thou wilt rule over us?" What did he do? He built them a wall, laid a water conduit, and undertook wars for them. Then he said to them : "Now I will rule over you." Then they answered : "Yea, yea."

In like manner God led the Israelites out of Egypt, divided the Red Sea for them, sent down manna for them, caused springs of water to arise, undertook wars with Amalek for them. Then said He to them : "I will rule over you." Then they answered : "Yea, yea."

14

There was a certain king of flesh and blood who went into a city. And he set up statues, and made himself images, and struck coins. After some time his statues were knocked down, his images broken, and his coins made worthless, and so destroyed the figure of the king.

In like manner he who sheds man's

blood the Scripture declares that he has destroyed the image of the king; for it is said: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man" (Gen. ix. 6).

15

At that hour the children of Israel were like a dove which flees before a hawk, and it takes refuge in the cleft of a rock. But a serpent comes hissing towards it. If it goes farther in, there is the serpent; if it comes out into the open, lo! the hawk is there.

In like manner was it with the Israelites in that hour. The sea closed up their way, and the enemy pressed them from behind. Then they turned themselves to prayer. That is clearly referred to in that Scripture which says: "O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs" (Song of Solomon, ii. 14). And it is said: "For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (Song of Solomon, ii. 14). "For sweet is thy voice," that refers to prayer—"and thy countenance is comely"—that refers to the study of the "Thora."

16

A certain man went out of his neighbour's house laden with goods. Then his companion met him, and said to him: "What

doest thou here?" He said to him: "Take thy share and tell nobody." After a time came the man to whom the stolen property belonged, and said to him: "Swear to me that thou hast seen no one leave my house laden with goods." The other said: "I swear that I know not what thou sayest." But the owner feels that the man is guilty in his heart, and says of him: "Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul" (Prov. xxix. 24).

17

A fox wanted to get into a vineyard, but the high wall which surrounded the vineyard barred his entrance. There was only one narrow hole in the wall, but the fox was too fat to squeeze himself through. What did cunning Reynard do? He starved himself for three days, whereby he became so thin that he was able to creep through the hole. Then he feasted himself bountifully on the grapes till he had had enough. But when he wanted to get out his pouch had become so swollen again that he was not able. He was obliged to fast three days more. When he was once more free he turned round and cried: "O vineyard, vineyard! how beautiful art thou, and how good are thy fruits! But ah! lean as I went in do I come out again." So is it even in life. Therefore it is said: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither" (Job i. 21).

18

A great crowd once assembled with joy at the harbour because a ship was about to be launched into the sea. When it glided out, the people rejoiced, and gladsome music was played. Soon after a ship came into the harbour, but nobody troubled himself about it. In silence and without salutation it was anchored. A philosopher who stood by thought to himself: "How perversely do men act! Ought they not rather to have rejoiced over the ship which has happily escaped the dangers of the sea, and has returned to the harbour laden with rich treasures? On the contrary, they rejoice over the ship whose fate is uncertain and which has to encounter a multitude of dangers. The new-born babe is like a ship beginning its voyage: the dying is like a ship which is just about to enter the haven.

19

Robbers once entered the palace of the king. They robbed his property, murdered his household, and destroyed the king's place. After a time the king sat in judgment on them. He imprisoned some of them, he killed others, and crucified others. Then he settled once more in his palace, and after that his kingdom was for ever renowned.

In like manner, as it is said: "The sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have estab-

lished. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever" (Ex. xv. 17-18).

20

A man has a patron. If some evil happens to him he does not enter suddenly into the presence of this patron, but he goes and stands at the door of his house. He does not ask for the patron, but for his favourite slave, or his son, who then goes and tells the master inside: "The man N.N. is standing at the gate of the hall, shall he come in or not?"

Not so the Holy One—praised be His name!—If misfortune comes upon a man let him not cry to Michael, and not to Gabriel, but unto Me let him cry, and I will answer him right speedily, as it is said: "Everyone who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

21

There was a king who bade all his servants to a great feast, but did not name the hour. Some went home and put on their best garments, and stood at the door of the palace; others said: There is sufficient time; the king will let us know beforehand. But the king summoned them of a sudden; and those that came in their best garments were well received, but the foolish ones who came in their slovenliness were turned away in disgrace. Repent to-day, lest to-morrow ye may be summoned.

XII

THREE STORIES OF HILLEL

I

HILLEL, the aged, after taking leave of his disciples at the close of his lecture went with them part of the way. Then his disciples said to him: "Rabbi, where goest thou?" Then said he to them: "I go in order to fulfil a lawful vow." Then said they to him: "And what is the nature of this vow?" He said to them: "To bathe in the bathhouse." Then said they to him: "How can that be a lawful vow?" Then said he to them: "Yea, for if in the case of statues of kings which people take the trouble to erect in the theatres and circuses, he who has charge of them is careful to wash them and keep them clean, and the people give him his living for his work, yea, he may even by virtue of his office take his place among the wealthy of the kingdom, how much more may I who have been created in the image of God as it is written: 'God created man in His own image' (Gen. i. 27), make myself

worthy when I wash and bathe the image of God, that is, myself?"

2

At another time Hillel, the aged, after taking leave of his disciples at the close of his lecture went with them part of the way. Then said his disciples to him: "Rabbi, where goest thou?" Then answered Hillel: "I go to show a kindness to a stranger in my house." Then said they to him: "Hast thou every day a guest in thy house?" Then answered he them: "Is not this poor, oppressed soul a guest in the body? To-day it is here; to-morrow it may be no longer here."

3

A man professing to be very wise or witty asked Hillel: "How many laws are there?" "Two," replied Hillel, one written and one oral." Whereupon the other said: "I believe in the first, but I do not see why I should believe in the second." "Sit down," Hillel said, while he wrote down the Hebrew Alphabet. "What letter is this?" he then asked, pointing to the first. "This is Aleph," "Good, the next?" "Beth." "Good again. But how do you know that this is 'Aleph,' and this 'Beth?'" "Thus have we learned from our ancestors." "Well," said Hillel, "as you have accepted this in good faith, accept also the other."

XIII

FAMILY LIFE

I

HE who remains unmarried deserves not the name of a man; for it is written: "Male and female created He them, and He called their name man (Adam).

2

The bachelor lives without joy, without blessing, without happiness.

3

He who marries a wife for the sake of her wealth gets wayward children.

4

Who is rich? He who has a beautiful wife, especially beautiful in character.

5

If a woman is true and virtuous she is like a vine which produces precious grapes; for it is said: "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house" (Ps. cxxviii. 3).

6

Peace is the foundation of wedded bliss.

7

If husband and wife are virtuous God dwells with them and blesses them.

8

He who loves his wife as himself, and honours her more than himself, and leads his sons and daughters the right way, and marries them at the right time, of him it is said: "Thou mayest be sure that peace shall dwell in thy tent, and when thou takest inventory of thy dwelling, thou wilt miss nothing."

9

Let the husband be always careful to treat his wife with respect, for the home owes its blessing to her.

10

Rabbi Abika said to his fellow-citizens: "Honour your wives; this will make you prosperous."

11

Be the husband only as big as an ant, yet the wife seats herself among the great.

12

Though the husband be but a field-watch the wife is content, and asks for no lentils in the pot.

13

Though the man be but a wool-comber
his wife calls him to the seat at the house
door, and sits down beside him.

14

Let a man eat and drink under his means,
and clothe himself according to his means,
and honour his wife beyond her means.

15

The woman of sixty will run after music
like one of six.

16

Let a man guard against giving pain to
his wife, for her tears come easily.

17

The worthiest woman is she who does her
husband's will.

18

The life of him who is ruled by his wife
is no life.

19

He who is ruled by his wife owes his mis-
fortune to himself.

20

A bad wife is like a day of rain. Who
has hell already in this world? The hus-
band of a wicked woman.

21

If thy wife is small stoop down and
whisper in her ear.

22

Even if a wife had a hundred slaves it is her duty to work, for idleness leads to extravagance.

23

When a husband's first wife dies, it is as if the temple had been destroyed.

24

"Thy sons and thy daughters will be given to a strange people." Here a stepmother is meant.

25

He who marries his youthful daughter to an old man sins against the command: "Thou shalt not prostitute thy daughter."

26

"God will not pardon him." This verse is directed towards him who marries his young daughter to an old man, or who allows a son of immature years to marry.

27

That one marries his daughter to an ignorant person, is the same as if he cast her bound before a lion.

28

Rabbi Simon ben Gamaliel stood once on the pinnacle of the temple, and beheld a heathen woman of great beauty. He exclaimed: "How beautiful are Thy works, O God!"

29

At the sight of the beautiful consort of Turnus Rufus, Rabbi Akiba burst into tears. "I weep," said he, "because such beauty must one day moulder in the dust."

30

Rabbi Johanan set up as a model of piety a very beautiful maiden whom he had once listened to while she prayed thus: "Lord of the world! Thou hast created heaven and earth, revellers, and virtuous: may it be Thy will that my beauty lead no one to sin."

31

First let a man build his house and plant a vineyard, and then let him wed a wife.

32

If the wife is sleepy, the bread-basket empties.

33

Even when she chatters, she still spins, (said of an industrious wife).

34

Rabbi Eliezer answered a woman who asked him an abstruse question that the only learning a woman needed was the distaff.

35

The prophet Elijah answered the question of the Rabbi Jose, as to how a woman was

the helpmeet of her husband (Gen. ii. 18): The man brings corn into the house—can he eat corn? He brings flax—can he wear flax? No, his wife (since she grinds the corn and spins the flax) is the light of his eyes, and sets him on his feet.”

36

He who beats his grown-up son urges him to sin.

37

Parents should never make a favourite of one child. For some ells of bright cloth the children of Israel were made slaves in Egypt (Gen. xxxvii. 3).

38

Whoever wishes to disinherit his children, may do it according to the law; but wise men do not approve of it. A Rabbi said if the children are rebellious, he may well do it, but Samuel said to his disciple Rabbi Jehudah: “Be not of those who disinherit a child, not even a rebellious child in favour of a dutiful one.

39

A man whose children had degenerated appointed Jonathan ben Usiel his sole heir. But the latter accepted only a third part: one third he devoted to pious objects and the other third he allowed back to the children of the testator.

40

Many a one gives his father pheasant to eat, and is punished for it if he does it in an unkindly manner. Many a one lets his father turn the handmill, and is rewarded for it if he does it lovingly and kindly.

41

Even when parents throw the worthless treasure of a child into the sea they may not scold.

42

The servant that is with you shall be well treated, eating and drinking and lodging like yourself. It is not becoming that you eat white bread and he black bread; that you drink old wine and he drink new; that you sleep on feather cushions and he on straw, especially when he is of the same race and faith; for whoever buys a Hebrew slave buys a master for himself.

43

Why is the Hebrew slave who does not wish to be free, nailed by the ear to the door-post? Because the door-post was a witness when God released Israel from the bondage of Egypt; but this slave does not wish to be free, and prefers slavery, therefore he is punished at the door-post (Deut. xv. 17).

XIV

VIRTUES AND VICES

I

HE who loveth virtue is like the sun that shineth at noonday. He who followeth after vice is like the feeble uncertain light of a star in the distance.

2

Benevolence is better than all sacrifice.

3

Let us be glad that there are importunate beggars. We would otherwise sin every day in giving to the poor too little.

4

During a famine King Monebaz opened his jewel chamber and caused his own treasures and those of his ancestors to be distributed among the poor. His relations reproached him for this, and said: "Your forefathers have collected treasures and increased the treasures of their ancestors, and thou squanderest them." Monebaz an-

swered : " My forefathers collected treasures at a place accessible to thieves ; I gather them at a place which thieves cannot reach. My forefathers collected material treasures ; I collect spiritual treasures. My forefathers collected for the temporal life ; I collect for the life eternal."

5

Who is always practising benevolence ?
He who has taken into his own house an orphan and trains and maintains it.

6

The physician Abba tried in vain to treat the poor. Frequently he gave them money with the advice : Go and nourish thy body with it.

7

Even the bird in the air recognises the avaricious.

8

He gives much who gives with kindness.

9

Who shows white teeth to the poor does more than he who gives him milk to drink.

10

Whoever gives alms let him give secretly so that the needy may not be ashamed.

11

What does the preacher mean when he speaks about good actions which were nevertheless bad? He has in his eye those who practise their charity openly.

12

The poor man shows a greater kindness to the giver than the giver to the poor.

13

Active help is more than alms-giving. The latter deals with money or with money's worth; the former with word and deed. With alms one can only reach the poor, with loving help can one reach everyone.

14

Turnus Rufus reproached Rabbi Akibu's benevolence in a parable. "A king," said he, "was angry at his slaves, and caused them to be cast into prison. A friend of the prisoners provided them secretly with good food and drink. When the king heard this he was angry at the friend. "So," said the Rabbi "a king was angry with his son, and caused him to be thrown into prison. A friend of the prisoner provided him secretly with good food and drink. When the king heard this he was glad, and bestowed on the benefactor of his son a valuable present."

15

“Ye shall follow the eternal One, the Lord your God.” What does this mean? It means ye should be benevolent as God, clothe the naked, visit and care for the sick, comfort the sad, bury the dead.

16

The Israelite is bound to practise kindness, even towards the heathen.

17

If a poor man will accept nothing, then give him the gift as a loan.

18

He who lends out money for nothing does a greater service than he who gives alms.

19

Better lending than alms-giving. Better than both to support someone in his trade.

20

When a poor man and a rich man wish to borrow, give the poor man the preference.

21

A creditor who knows that his debtor cannot pay him should refrain from pressure in order not to bring him to ruin.

22

“Who putteth not his money to usury.” On this Rabbi Saphra adds: “Not even to a heathen.” This remark Rabbi Nachmann makes in the name of Rabbi Huna to the verse: “Whoever increases his wealth with interest and usury gathers it for a benefactor of the poor.

23

Of usurers it is written: “The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob: ‘Surely I will never forget any of their works’” (Amos viii. 7).

24

Usurers declare our teacher Moses to be a fool and his teaching to be false.

25

The usurer by his receipts cuts himself off from any part in the God of Israel.

26

Who practises hospitality entertains God Himself.

27

To love one's neighbour is the first virtue.

28

The best quality is a good heart.

29

Meet every one kindly and with good will.
Greet every one kindly and politely, even
the heathen on the road.

30

Judge thy neighbour indulgently and
charitably. Judge no one before thou art
in his position.

31

What chiefly caused the second breaking
up of the Jewish State? Neighbourly dis-
like and hatred for which there was no cause.

32

He who does not share the sorrows of the
whole will have no part in their joys.

33

Goodwill is a duty both to Jew and
Gentile.

34

Love him who shows thee thy faults more
than him who only praises thee.

35

At the door of the house of plenty all our
friends are found ; from the door of poverty
friendship flees.

36

A selfish love passes away with its object
(its gratification) ; a genuine love never

passes away. An example of the first is the love of Amnon for Tamar ; of the second, of the friendship of David and Jonathan.

37

A bundle of reeds can no one break ; a single reed a child may break.

38

Into the well out of which one has drunk one should not cast a stone.

39

Ingratitude is worse than theft ; for it is said : " Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good ? " (Gen. xliv. 4). It was not the theft of the cup that caused Joseph to reproach his brethren, but what was worse — their ingratitude.

40

When man one day will have to give a reckoning of his earthly life, the first question which the eternal judge will put to him will be : " Wert thou upright and honest in thy business relations ? "

41

Whoever is unjust, even to the extent of a penny, towards his neighbour, sins against him grievously.

42

Whoever does an injury towards a fellow-man sins more grievously than he who robs a temple.

43

“After righteousness, after righteousness shalt thou strive.” The meaning of the double exhortation is : “towards Jew and towards Gentile.”

44

Defraud not in payment of taxes.

45

Jerusalem was destroyed because the inhabitants kept strictly to their rights and gave no place to moderation.

46

Pray for the welfare of the Government, for without it men would destroy each other alive.

47

If a disciple sits before his teacher while some matter of justice is being discussed, and knows reason for the rich man being charged, and the poor man being set free, then it is his duty to speak. For it is said : “Thou shalt fear no one.”

48

Who honours his fellow-men is himself honoured. Let the honour of thy neighbour be dearer than thine own.

49

Honour will flee from the man who hunts after it. It will pursue the man who flees from it.

50

A man ought to imitate God. He despised all the high mountains, and revealed Himself on lowly Sinai.

51

Be rather the tail of the lion than the head of the fox.

52

Man was created on the sixth day, so that he may not be proud; for the gnat was created before him.

53

What a noble virtue is humility since it outweighs all sacrifices!

54

Pride is a mask for our own failings.

55

The spittle will fall in his face who spits in the air.

56

The haughty man is disagreeable, even to his own family.

57

The gift of prophecy departs from the prophet who is haughty; and wisdom from a haughty philosopher.

58

A Rabbi said: "A scholar must have a sixty-fourth part of pride." Rabbi Huna added: "It adorns him as the beard the wheat." But Rabbi Nachman said: "No; not the least. It is written: 'Every one that is proud is an abomination unto the Lord'" (Prov. xv. 5).

59

A congregation should choose a leader on whose back hangs a sack of worms. If he is haughty and proud, one can say to him: "Look behind thee!"

60

Those who are reviled and revile not again, who let themselves be slandered and answer not back again, who suffer willingly and do not murmur—of such it is said: "The friends of God will shine as the morning sun."

61

Whoever calls anyone Raca does him a mortal injury (St Matt. v. 22).

62

Better that a man should let himself be cast into the fire than that anyone should publicly shame him. Putting thy neighbour to open shame is like drawing blood.

63

If anyone has injured another, even in word, he ought to ask his forgiveness.

64

Three persons are in the highest degree deserving punishment: the adulterer; he who puts anyone to open shame; he who calls anyone by a nickname, even though the man is accustomed to this name.

65

“Ye shall not give pain to one another.” This refers to pain caused by words. How is it to be understood? If anyone was formerly vicious, ye are not to remind him of it. If there is any defect in his family, ye are not to draw attention to it. If a misfortune has befallen him, ye are not to ascribe this to his sins. One should not send a buyer of corn to anyone whom one knows does not sell corn. It is even wrong to pretend to be willing to buy wares when one has neither the desire nor the power to purchase. If a person in anyone’s family has lost his life by hanging one should not say to him: “Hang up the fish!” for he might take it as an allusion.

66

One should always in speech and answer be quiet, peaceful and gentle towards the

inmates of the house and relatives, as towards everybody, even towards the heathen on the road, so that one may be loved in heaven and pleasing on earth.

67

Be of the disciples of Aaron. Love peace and follow after it ; love men and lead them to virtue.

68

There is no better horn of blessing than peace.

69

Strife is like a crack in a vessel, it always grows larger.

70

In Palestine they say : " Who is first silent in a quarrel springs from a good family.

71

Whoever raises his hand against anyone, even though he does not strike him, is called a villain.

72

The establishing of peace among men is rewarded both in earth and in heaven.

73

Be not too positive in thy assertions, for thou art not incapable of error.

74

Be angry and sin not.

75

He who in anger rends his garments, destroys things, and throws away money, is on the way to rebellion. For thus does evil impulse work: to-day it will drive thee to this, and to-morrow to the greatest extreme.

76

There are four temperaments: Being easily enraged and easily pacified; being with difficulty enraged and with difficulty pacified; being easily enraged and with difficulty pacified; being with difficulty enraged and easily pacified.

77

Make no attempt at reconciliation as long as anger exists.

78

It is strictly forbidden to torture a beast. He who is on a journey and has not his beast with him must suffer pain.

79

One ought not to sit down to table before seeing that his domestic animals have been provided with food.

80

Moses and David were appointed by God shepherds of Israel, because they had been compassionate towards the lambs when they were shepherds. God said: "He who has feeling for an animal will be compassionate towards men."

81

A calf that was being led to the slaughter block escaped from its driver and fled to Rabbi Jehudah. He pushed it away with the words: "Away with thee! that is thy destiny." From that day Rabbi Jehudah was pursued by some great evil. One day he noticed that his maid was about to kill some young weasels. "Let them live!" said the Rabbi. "It is written: 'God's mercy extendeth to all his creatures.'" From that day events prospered with him.

82

Rabbi Hillel said: "Judge not thy neighbour till thou hast stood in his place (Sec. xiv. 30).

83

Be always gentle like Hillel, not blustering like Schammai.

84

Mar Ukba put this question to Rabbi Eleaser: "I have evil enemies, and might denounce them to the Government—may I

do so?" The Rabbi took a parchment and wrote on it this verse: "I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me" (Ps. xxxix. 1) But Mar Ukha said again: "They torment me so that I can scarcely restrain myself." The Rabbi gave this further reply: "Look in silence to God and hope in Him. Look to God and He will enable thee to triumph over them. Be early and late in the synagogue and your enemies will retire of themselves."

85

One Rabbi before he went to rest at night used to say: "Grant that all injuries that I have received this day may be forgiven."

86

Silence is the hedge of wisdom. Silence becometh the wise man, how much more the fool?

87

One word is worth a pound, silence is worth two. There is nothing better for a man than silence, for he who utters many words cannot avoid making mistakes.

88

A word is like the bee: it has honey and a sting.

89

Slander is worse than the three greatest crimes: idolatry, adultery, and bloodshed.

90

The slanderous tongue kills three: the slandered, the slanderer, and him who listens to the slander.

91

The slanderer, he who listens to slander, and he who bears false witness are worthy to be thrown to the dogs.

92

Many sin against themselves through unrighteousness, almost all through slander, or at least through the dust of slander.

93

Three sins one has to account for daily: unchaste imaginations, unsuitable prayer, and evil talk about one's neighbour.

94

This is the manner of go-betweens—they begin with the good and end with the bad.

95

Always judge thy neighbour indulgently and with exculpation.

96

Judge no one till thou art in his place and knowest what temptations he has to resist.

97

Falsehood passes away, but truth remains.

98

A lie has no feet.

99

Truth is the seal of God.

100

Let thy yea, be yea, and thy nay, nay.

101

The lips may not speak other than what the heart thinks.

102

Strict uprightness is a duty towards the Gentile as well as towards the Jew.

103

Thou mayest not press anyone to eat in thy house in the expectation that he will decline, nor mayest thou offer anyone a present in the expectation that he will refuse it.

104

Samuel once scolded his servant when he gave as payment to a Gentile ferryman a fowl not allowed by ritual law, without telling him

that it was not permitted to an Israelite ; for the ferryman in consequence put a higher value upon it.

105

Accept the truth from every man.

106

Promise little, perform much.

107

He who does not keep his promise stands in a level with the idolater. The righteous promise little and perform much ; the wicked promise much and perform but very little.

108

Thy friend has a friend, and thy friend's friend has a friend : be discreet.

109

No man should be made responsible for words which he utters in his grief.

110

Confidential communications should not be repeated without permission.

111

Beautiful is knowledge in union with modesty. A man ought never to take immodest expressions on his lips, and should at all times use becoming words.

112

If unbecoming expressions are used one should put the finger into the ear in order not to hear them.

113

If thou meet anyone who seems about to greet thee, greet him first if possible. Of Rabbi Johanan it is recorded that he greeted everyone first, even the Gentile in the lane.

114

Receive and meet everyone kindly.

115

Eat and drink according to thy means, dress beyond thy means. Rabbi Johanan called clothes dignities.

116

No one should enter a house in a disrespectful manner, not even his own.

117

Rabbi Gamaliel praised the Persians for their moderation in eating, drinking, and other things.

118

“How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob!” This praise they received because their windows were not opposite each other, so that neighbours could not look into each others’ houses.

119

A man should always follow the customs of the place. Moses went up towards heaven and ate not. The angels came down to earth and ate.

120

Weep not in the presence of those who laugh, and laugh not in the presence of those who weep. Wake not among those who sleep, and sleep not among those who wake. Stand not while others sit, and sit not while others stand.

121

To eat on the road is to behave like a dog.

122

Three things are good in a small degree and not good in a large degree. Leaven, salt, and refusal of attentions.

123

Israel is compared to the stars of the heaven and the dust of the earth. If he rises, he rises high, even to the stars ; if he falls, he falls very low, even to the dust.

124

The land of Israel is not without reason called beautiful as a gazelle ; when it is inhabited it stretches like the skin of a gazelle, when it is not inhabited it shrinks up.

125

Rabbi Essajah added to a Scripture verse the remark: "God has shown a favour to the people of Israel in that he scattered them among the nations. God has scattered them among the nations in order to spread a belief in the true God."

126

By three qualities is the true Israelite distinguished: compassion, modesty and benevolence.

127

"Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isa. xlviii 10). This shows that God found nothing better for Israel than poverty; even as the proverb says: "Poverty adorns the Israelite as a red rose adorns a white horse."

128

Why is Israel compared to the olive? As the olive does not yield its oil unless it is pressed, so the Israelites do not return to the right way except through suffering.

129

The world was created only for Israel.

130

Till ten generations have passed, speak thou not contemptuously of the Gentiles in the hearing of a proselyte.

131

Woe to the Gentile nations for their loss, and they know not what they have lost ; for as long as the temple existed the altar made atonement for them, but now who is to atone ?

132

The pious of the nations of the world have a portion in the world to come.

133

Even the bad in Israel are full of good works, like a pomegranate.

134

The Messianic time is distinguished from the present only in this, that the oppressions of Israel will have ceased.

135

Israel has to expect no Messiah ; for the Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in the time of King Hezekiah.

136

Job wished to plead for freedom of speech for all sinners. He said : " Lord of the world ! Thou createst the bullock ; Thou createst the ass ; therefore Thou has created the just and also the wicked."

137

Neither Moses nor Elias has ever passed into the heavens, but it says : "The heavens are the Lord's ; but the earth hath He given to the children of men " (Ps. cxv. 16).

138

A poor man's wife died after child-birth, and it came to pass that the man got milk in his own breast so that he could satisfy the infant himself. A Rabbi said : "How worthy this man must have been that the laws of nature were altered for his sake !" "No," said another, "more worthy would he have been if the laws of nature had not been altered for his sake."

139

Weapons and what relates to war are no ornament, but a shame to the age. For of truly civilised times the prophets foretold that "swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more " (Micah iv. 3).

140

All ceremonial laws will one day cease. Even swine flesh will one day be allowed.

141

When the Egyptians were drowned in the sea the angels wished to sing songs. But

God said : " My creatures perish and ye would sing songs ! "

142

Bewail him who suffers, not him who dies. He goes to peace ; we remain below to suffer.

143

Comfort not the mourner as long as his dead still lies before him.

144

Strive so to live that men may be able to say something good at thy grave.

145

For the righteous man we do not need to erect a monument, for his deeds are his memorial. The greatness of the righteous will be revealed after death.

146

The upright among the heathen will have part in eternal life.

147

Rabbi Hillel said : " Do not believe in thyself till the day of thy death. "

148

" Life is a passing shadow, " says the Scripture. Is it the shadow of a tower, of a tree ? a shadow that prevails for a while ? No, it

is the shadow of a bird in his flight. Away flies the bird, and there is neither bird nor shadow.

149

The day is short and the work is great ; but the labourers are idle though the reward be great and the Master of the work presses. It is not incumbent upon thee to complete the work, but thou must not therefore cease from it. If thou hast worked much, great shall be thy reward, for the Master who employed thee is faithful in His payments. But know that the true reward is not of this world.

XV

JUSTICE AND JUDGMENT

I

WHEN do justice and goodwill meet? When the contending parties are made to agree peaceably.

2

He who unjustly hands over one man's goods to another shall pay God for it with his own soul.

3

In the hour when the judge sits in judgment over his fellowmen, he shall feel, as it were, a sword pointed at his own heart.

4

Woe unto the judge, who, convinced of the unrighteousness of a cause seeks to throw the blame on the witnesses. From him God will ask an account.

5

When the parties stand before you, look upon both as guilty; but when they are dis-

missed, let them both be innocent in thine eyes, for the decree has gone forth.

6

When an Israelite and a Gentile have a lawsuit before thee, if thou canst, acquit the former according to the laws of Israel, and tell the latter, "such is our law." If thou canst get him off in accordance with Gentile law, do so, and say to the plaintiff, "Such is your law." But if he cannot be acquitted according to either law, then bring forward adroit pretexts and secure his acquittal. These are the words of Rabbi Ishmael.

7

Rabbi Akiva says: "No false pretext should be brought forward, because if found out, the name of God would be blasphemed; but if there is no fear of that, then it may be adduced.

8

The conscientiousness of the judge should be as great in a case where a matter of trifling value is concerned as in a case where something of great worth is involved.

9

Once certain labourers broke a cask full of wine belonging to a Rabbi. When they could not repair the injury, he took their cloak in pledge. They complained of this

to an eminent teacher who decided that the cloak should be restored. "Must I do that?" asked the Rabbi. "No," replied the teacher, "not by right but by favour." The labourers now wished their wages also because they had nothing to eat. The judge said, "this also should be given them." "That too!" cried the Rabbi; but the judge said it is written; "that thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous" (Prov. ii. 20).

10

A judge should feel as if a sharp sword lay between his knees and hell were open under him.

11

"Thou shalt judge thy neighbour righteously." This also means that the judge may not order one party to sit and let the other stand. He may not say to one: "Be brief!" while he allows the other to talk on.

12

A judge shall not tread on the heads of the holy people.

13

How is one to awe the witnesses who are called to testify in matters of life and death? When they are brought into court, they are charged thus: "Perchance you would speak from conjecture, or rumour, as a witness from

another witness, having heard it from 'some trustworthy man'—or perchance you are not aware that we shall proceed to search and to try you with close questions and searching scrutiny. Know ye that not like trials about money are trials over life and death. In trials of money, a man may redeem his guilt by money, and he may be forgiven. In trials of life, the blood not only of him who has been falsely condemned will hang over the false witness, but also that of the seed of his seed, even unto the end of the world; for thus we find that when Cain killed his brother, it is said: "The voice of thy brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground." The word blood stands there in the plural number, to indicate to you that the blood of him, together with that of his seed, has been shed. Adam was created alone, to show you that he who destroys one single life will be called to account for it, as if he had destroyed a whole world. But on the other hand, ye might say to yourselves: "What have we to do with all this misery here? Remember then, that Holy Writ has said (Lev. v. 1): "If a witness hath seen or known, if he do not utter he shall bear his iniquity." But perchance ye might say, "Why shall we be guilty of this man's blood? Remember then, what is said in Proverbs (xi. 10): "In the destruction of the wicked there is joy."

14

Bless God for the evil as well as the good. When you hear of a death say : "Blessed is the righteous Judge!"

15

When the righteous dies it is the earth that loses. The lost jewel will always be a jewel, but the possessor who has lost it may well weep.

16

The reward of good works is like dates : sweet and ripening late.

17

How canst thou escape sin? Think of three things: whence thou comest, whither thou goest, and to whom thou wilt have to account for all thy deeds: even to the King of kings, the All Holy — praised be His name!

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NOTES

I. 1. Dr Delitzsch says of this: "Where the Chaldee translator of Gen. ii. 7 got this triad of colours, and what meaning the inventor had for it, I know not. But one thing is clear. The three colours appear here as the colours essential to man as such, and therefore as emblems of humanity."

II. 8. Akiba lived in Jaffa at the period of the second temple after the destruction of Jerusalem. About the year 133 A.D. he paid the penalty of his extreme devotion to the law. In the midst of his revolutionary dreams of a new independence, he who had not hesitated to pronounce openly for the abolition of capital punishment, was cruelly put to death by Turnus Rufus. Jehudah the Holy, called also "Rabbi," is said to have been born on the day of the martyrdom of Akiba, and completed the work which he and Hillel and other Rabbis had attempted—the redaction of the whole unwritten law into a code, about the year 200 A.D.

V. 4. Cf. "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."—St Matt. xxv. 29.

VI. 8. Referring to Renan's statement that *Hillel fut le vrai maître Jesus*, the late Canon Liddon says: "As an instance of our Lord's real independence of Hillel, a single example may suffice." A recent writer on the Talmud gives the following story:—"One day a heathen went to Shammai, the head of the rival academy, and asked him mockingly to convert him to the law while he stood on one leg. The irate master turned him from the door. He then

went to Hillel, who gave him that reply—since so widely propagated — ‘Do not unto another what thou wouldst not have another do unto thee. This is the whole law ; the rest is mere commentary.’ The writer in the *Quarterly Review* appears to assume the identity of Hillel’s saying with the precept of our Blessed Lord, St Matt. vii. 12 ; St Luke vii. 31. Yet, in truth, how wide is the interval between the merely *negative* rule of the Jewish President (which had already been given in Tobit iv. 15), and the *positive* precept of the Divine Master !” The writer in the *Quarterly Review* referred to was Emanuel Deutsch, and the passage is reprinted in his “Literary Remains,” p. 31. The passage from Tobit is : “Do that to no man which thou hatest.” Cf. also “Tse-Kung asked, saying : ‘Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one’s life?’ The master (Confucius) said : ‘Is not *reciprocity* such a word? What you do not want done to yourself do not do to others.’”—Legge’s “Confucian Analects,” xv. 23. See also “Rabbi Jesus : Sage and Saviour,” pp. 258-9. By William Macintosh, M.A., Ph.D.

VI. 8. Hillel was the most distinguished of the Jewish Rabbis about the time of Christ, and was called the second Ezra. He was born in Babylon, of poor parents, but is said to have belonged to the House of David in the female line. He came to Jerusalem in his desire for knowledge, but was so poor that “once when he had not money enough to fee the porter of the Academy, he climbed up the window-sill one bitter winter’s night. As he lay there listening, the cold gradually made him insensible, and the snow covered him up. The darkness of the room first called the attention of those inside to the motionless form without. He was restored to life.” He was made President of the Sanhedrim about 30 B.C. He died 10 A.D. Schammai, the contemporary of Hillel, was the head of the rival school, and was by no means so popular. From the stories recorded of him he seems to have been of an iras-

cible temper. Hillel, on the contrary, was gentle-natured.

VI. 41. This saying is reported of more than one Rabbi. Browning attributes it to a "Rabbi Ben Karshook," and versifies it and another witty saying in the following manner:—

BEN KARSHOOK'S WISDOM

I

"Would a man 'scape the rod?"
 Rabbi Ben Karshook saith,
 "See that he turns to God
 The day before his death."

 "Ay, could a man enquire
 When it shall come," I say;
 The Rabbi's eye shoots fire—
 "Then let him turn to-day."

II

Quoth a young Sadducee—
 "Reader of many rolls,
 Is it so certain we
 Have, as they tell us, souls?"

 "Son, there is no reply!"
 The Rabbi bit his beard:
 "Certain a soul have I—
We may have none," he sneered.

Thus Karshook, the Hiram's Hammer,
 The Right-hand Temple Column,
 Taught babes their grace in grammar,
 And struck the simple solemn.

VI. 49. *Cf.* St Matt. vii. 4-5.

VII. 15. On this passage Emanuel Deutsch remarks: "This reminds us irresistibly of the words of

Christ: 'Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns: yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?' " But Franz Delitzsch, an equally great Talmudist scholar and a Christian, makes the following comment: — "Mr Deutsch draws a great number of such parallels, but he deceives himself and others with them because he cannot appreciate the difference in the passages compared, nor does he keep account of the difference in their dates. When did this Simeon, son of Elazar, live? In the time of the Emperor Hadrian, at least a whole century later than Jesus. We will not assert on this account that he quotes directly from the gospel of Matthew, which was circulated in a Hebrew version, nor that he quotes indirectly from Christian tradition; but if there be an actual relationship between these passages, it is evident here, as in most other cases, that Christ's is the original saying, and Simeon's the copy. We have said in *most* other cases, we might almost say in *all* other cases; for except Hillel, about whom I have written elsewhere, all the Talmudic teachers, whose sayings touch on those of the New Testament, belong to a much later date than Christ and the documents of Christianity."

VIII. 1. For the phrase "flesh and blood" ("man"), which occurs frequently in rabbinical literature, *see* St Matt. xvi. 17, and Gal. i. 16.

IX. 13. This is an interesting parallel to the prayer of the Pharisee in the parable related by Christ, St Luke xviii. 11-12. The parable, we may be sure, was founded on fact.

IX. 15. *Cf.*—

"So nimmt ein Kind der Mutter Brust,
Nicht gleich im Anfang willig an.
Doch bald ernährt es sich mit Lust.
So wird's Euch an der Weisheit Brüsten
Mit jedem Tage mehr gelüsten."

Faust I.

IX. 47. Apparently an echo of Prov. xxvii. 17.

IX. 65. *Cf.* St Matthew xv. 25-28.

IX. 49. The Galilean dialect was very pronounced, as we may gather from St Matt. xxvi. 69-73, and St Luke xxii. 56-59.

X. 14. Is this a reminiscence of the miracle related in St John iv. 46-53?

XI. 3. *Cf.* St Luke xvi. 10: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

XI. 21. *Cf.* the parable of the Ten Virgins. St Matt. xxv. 1-13.

XII. 1. *See* also vi. 8. It will be seen from these stories that Rabbi Hillel was possessed of a considerable vein of humour.

XIV. 9. To "show white teeth" is to be friendly towards them.

XIV. 10, 11. *Cf.* St Matt. vi. 3: "When thou doest alms let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

XIV. 12. That is, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

XIV. 59. That is, one whose past is not irreproachable. The saying is evidently a sarcasm on the self-righteous presidents of the synagogue.

XIV. 115. The Rabbi is evidently speaking ironically, since "Clothes make the man," as our great Clothes Philosopher, Professor Teufelsdröckh, so learnedly teacheth!

XV. 9. There are other versions of this story, but they are all substantially the same.



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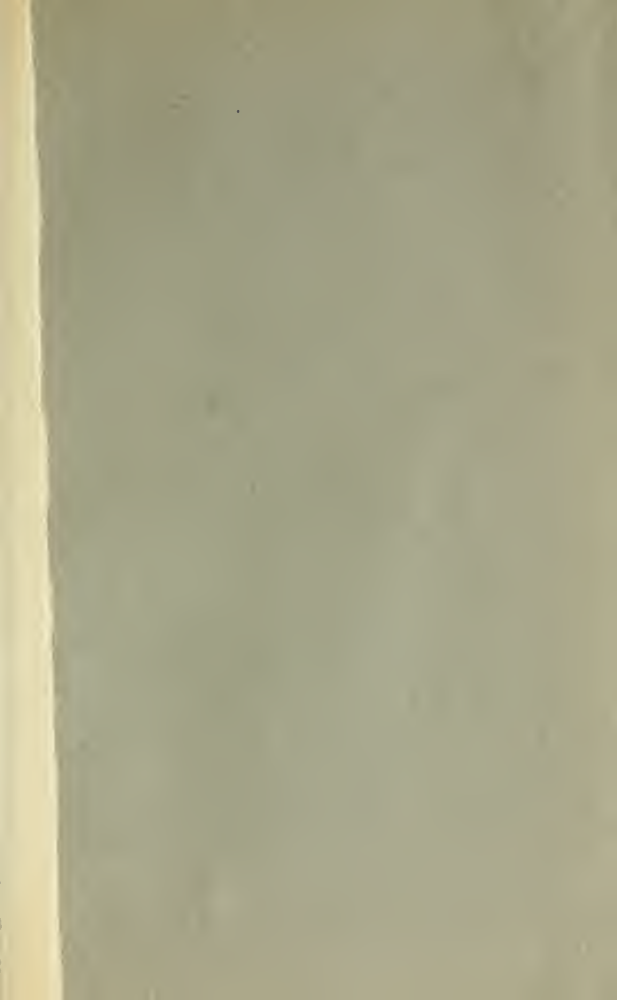
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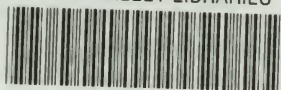
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